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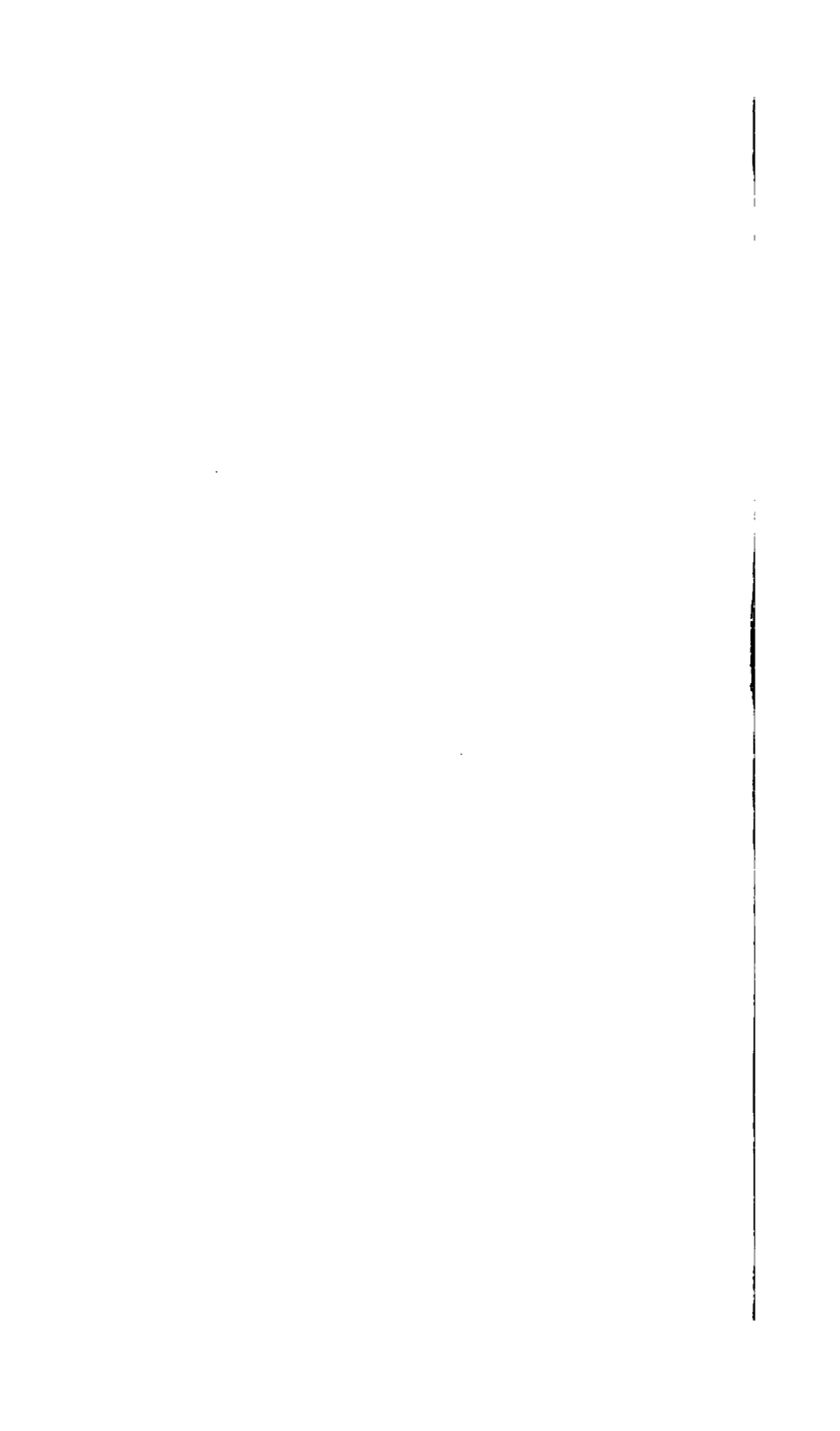
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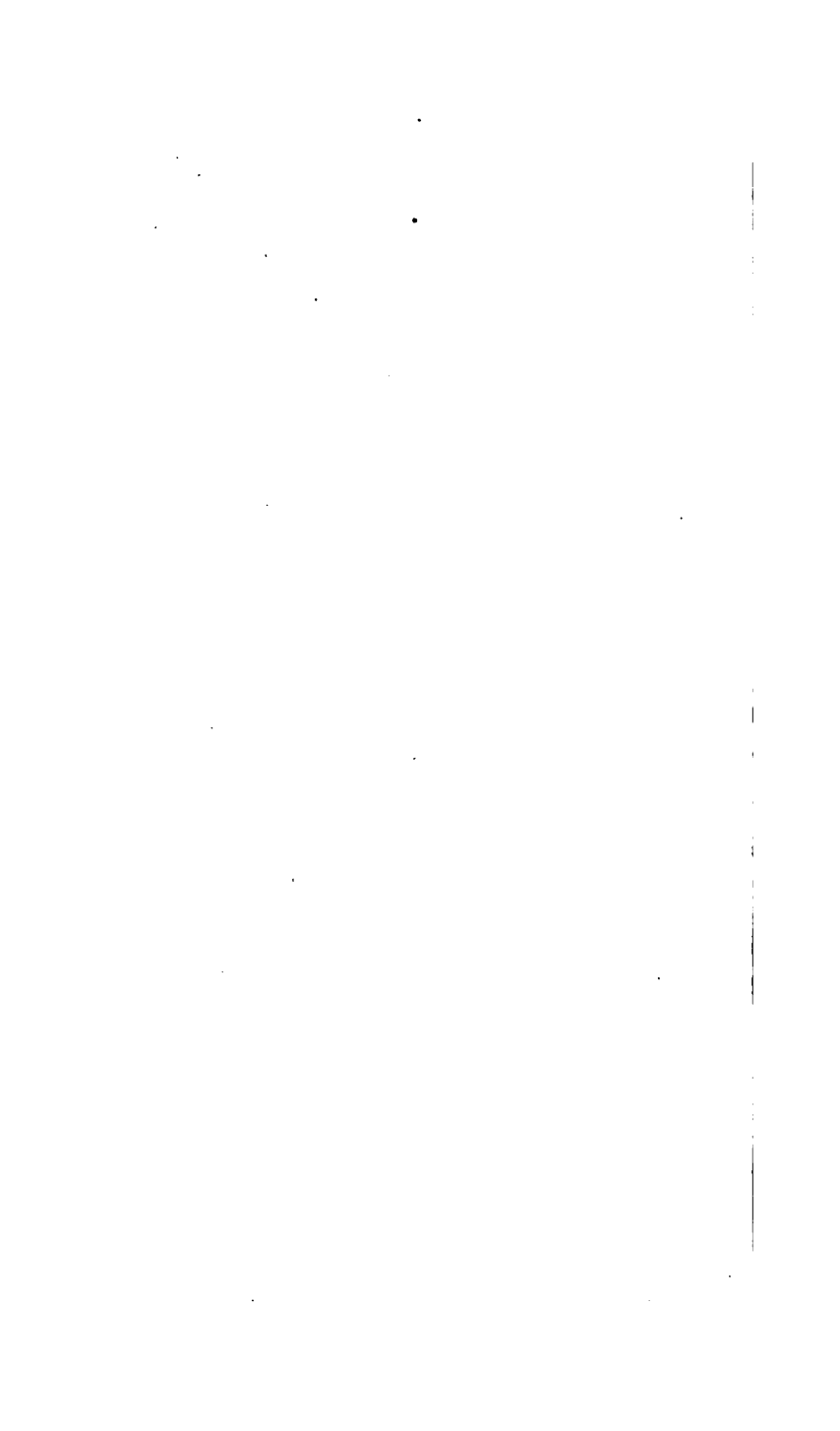
"SHANGHAI MERCURY"

*During the latter part of the year 1899.
with Six additional Chapters
added in 1902.*

With a Table of Chronology and a Map.

SHANGHAI:
OCTOBER, 1902.

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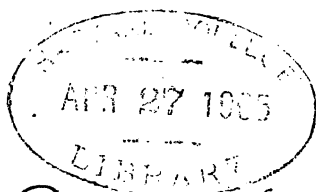


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Prof. S. C. Coolidge

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PREFACE.

IF a long residence in the Far East, a constant watching of the course of events, an intimate acquaintance with Far Eastern opinion, and plentiful reference to the latest writings on his subject in volumes and reviews are amongst the qualifications necessary to the preparation of even so modest a little volume as this, the writer may fairly lay claim to them all.

His object has been to provide the busy man with a story so short as not to trench too

heavily upon his time, the "man in the street" with an easily consulted summary of events up to date, and the student of contemporary politics with a condensed view of what is perhaps the *via media* between the two extremes of opinion held even in the British communities in China and Japan.

As the final pages are passing through the press, there is evidence that *The Story of Russia and the Far East* may speedily need new chapters. Great Britain is at war with the South African Republics, and Continental sympathy is with the subject, not with the suzerain. Taking advantage of this, it is said that Russia contemplates action at Herat, and in Persia. She is, also, almost at daggers drawn with Japan over Korean coast ports. The United States have declared for

the "open door" in China, and, with the Philippine rebellion as an excuse, are practically doubling their naval strength on this station. Japan is pressing forward her new construction with the utmost haste, while Russia is adding to hers.

That there has been a partial *rapprochement* between Japan and China is certain: how far it has gone is a profound secret at the moment. The Korean cloud is ominous, but it may not burst.

So far as the Siberian Railway is concerned the latest information points to continued activity in its construction. It is said to be certain, however, that long sections already "finished" will have to be relaid more solidly before regular traffic can begin.

Amongst the more recent works which the writer has

consulted may be mentioned *Russia on the Pacific* by "Vladimir," Curzon's *Problems of the Far East*, and *The Far East* by Henry Norman, together with most of the contributions bearing on the subject in all the recent English and American Reviews. The first is, however, by far the most important issued up to the present, and may confidently be recommended to all who have the time to spare to read it. On the importance of its subject the writer says: "For the future history of the world, the conquest of Siberia will be more important than most of the modern history of Russia." And, it may be added, on the immediate future of China and the Far East generally hangs the destiny of half the human race.

SHANGHAI, *December* 1899.

THE STORY OF RUSSIA AND THE FAR EAST.

I.—HOW THE STORY BEGINS.

"HAPPY is the land that hath no history." So runs a well-known proverb in the vein of paradox which popular sayings sometimes affect. We need not pause to consider how much of it is fact and how much sentiment, how much will bear the test of critical examination, and how much was due to "personal equation." One thing is certain ; it was never said of any really great nation. For great nations whether their course has run happily or the reverse, have, like great trees, roots which spread and ramify until their ends are lost in the dim distance of the misty past. They go back to the time when the world

was young, and demigods ruled over the destinies of men. These lands are not the upstarts of a moment, and even if at times matters have gone awry with them, SOPHIE ARNOULD'S epigram would still be *apropos*, "Oh! c'était le bon temps, j'étais bien malheureuse!"—Oh! it was so nice then, I was so unhappy!—Nor was it of them or their like that DEFOE wrote his stinging satire, Great families of yesterday we show,
And lords, whose parents were the Lord knows
who.

History may not be altogether a record of the happiness of a race, but without history there is no past of which the present may be proud.

And there is a past of which Russia's sons may be as proud as England's are of hers. To go back no further than the ninth century, we find the ancestors of the present Slavs established much nearer to the centre of Europe than they are now. In the south-east they reached to the Adriatic; they occupied Austria and had possession of at least a portion of the Elbe valley, whence they stretched away to Lake Ladoga,

besides being domiciled in the valleys of the Volga and other rivers. It would seem as if their point of origin was somewhere on the Danube. In the ninth century the celebrated RURIK came over by invitation with two other Scandinavian princes to rule the northern Slavs, and it is from him that most, if not all, noble Russian families trace their descent.

The split between the Latin and Greek Churches over the *Filioque* controversy had the effect of shutting out Russia from the rest of Europe to a large extent. She had her own internal dissensions, but otherwise little of severe military trial until 1224 A.D. when the Golden Horde, part of the vast force under the sons of GENGHIS KHAN swept over Europe, burying Russia, and carrying devastation up to the very gates of the cities of Hungary. For two weary centuries did the Tartar hold sway over the Slav, whose Christianity was the only bond binding him to his compatriots. More than one effort was made to throw off this odious yoke, but not till the days of IVAN III, who assumed the title "Autocrat of all

Russia," were they finally vanquished. This was in the year 1480, when the Wars of the Roses were yet unfinished in England, when CAXTON had just introduced to us the new art of printing, and COLUMBUS was dreaming of the great voyage which a dozen years later was to result in the discovery of the New World. The fourth IVAN was surnamed the Terrible, not without cause. He came to the throne in 1533, and his marriage with a ROMANOFF led in later years to the accession of that dynasty to the throne when the last of the RURIKS was no more. To English people this is one of the most interesting periods in Russian history. Not merely was progress rapid, printing introduced, artists and men of letters patronized, but there was quite a friendly connection formed with England. IVAN evidently saw the importance of commerce. He not only welcomed a commercial envoy from Great Britain, RICHARD CHANCELLOR, but he did everything in his power to foster trade between the two countries, and finally, when a widower, (he was

six times in that unfortunate position!) proposed for the hand of Queen ELIZABETH.

What might have been the result of such an alliance would be an interesting subject for speculation. Possibly instead of two great world empires there might now only be one, the whole course of the earth's history might have run in different grooves, and the story of Russia and the Far East been altogether, as RUDYARD KIPLING would say—another story.

We have omitted all reference to the varied squabbles between the different duchies and other states of which Russia was composed, as well as of her contests with Poland and other western lands. They do not come into the focus of the series of "Kodak" views in which we wish to present our subject, and hence need not trouble us much. There is, however, one portion of early Russian expansion to which it is necessary to refer—the absorption of and by the Cossacks. These were themselves Russians, but "mostly lawless characters; and their distance from Mos-

cow, the immunity from law, the liberty of the boundless plains, the constant contact with the Tartars converted them into marauders like their Asiatic neighbours." They were called Cossacks to distinguish them from the settled Russian population. The most noted of them at first "lived in the islands of the Dneiper around its rapids." Here they were in what is known as Little Russia. They formed a sort of military republic in which common danger from external foes was a tie that nothing could loose. Bold, daring, and adventurous, some of them were as much at home in dug-outs and other crazy craft on the water as others were on horseback scouring the steppes. Rough and ready, they formed a screen between the savage Asiatic and the more civilized European. Their training was thus of precisely the nature to form an alert, bold, active, hardy race, whom no dangers could cow, no hardships deter, no suffering kill. Our backwoods men and pioneers in Canada and the United States were cast in somewhat the same mould. The Cossack

has ever been the *avant courreur* of Russian civilization. From the Dneiper, he went to the Don, to the Volga, to the Ural; now we have him on the Amur, the Pacific Coast, at Port Arthur, and even at Hankow.

Such are the men to whom more than to any one else Russia owes her expansion across the Asiatic Continent. The early journeys of these intrepid explorers, hunters, horsemen, boatmen, and what not, will occupy our next chapter. The story is as thrilling as any in our own annals, and with adventurous blood in our own veins we are able to appreciate daring in others, whether it is clad in the sheep skin of YERMAK, the Cossack of the 16th, or in the uniform of MARCHAND, the Frank, of the 19th century.

II.—HOW THE COSSACKS CROSSED SIBERIA.

MODERN enterprise was born in the dying days of mediæval slumber. The stimulus which in the last days of the nineteenth century sends one to the frozen north, another to the Sahara, this to the pine forests of Columbia, that to the teak woods of Burma, without regard to climate or comfort, to difficulty or danger is the same in nature with that which drove the first Cossack across the "girdle," as the Ural means in Russian, from Europe into Siberia. Two words suffice to account for it—trade and adventure. The mercantile instinct no sooner hears of a demand than it proceeds to look about for a supply. Therein is the secret of the opening up of the great North-east. Men and women, especially women, wanted furs, and

hunters went wider and wider afield in search of them, just as to-day they do for the skins of birds. So at length they came to the Ural range, with its towering heights as the plain dwellers doubtless thought them. The barrier was crossed, and in 1499 an abortive expedition set out to conquer the Ob land. But as Russia hardly had even shadowy control of the European side so far east nothing came of this adventure, and it was not till 1581 that YERMAK, the Cossack pirate, freebooter, and hero started on his perilous enterprise.* It was a time of geographical fever which seemed to affect the whole world. COLUMBUS, VASCO DA GAMA, DIAZ, and other adventurers of similar kidney had by the success of their travels inoculated the world with the burning desire to go on voyages and travels of discovery. Englishmen had traversed Russia and reached the Arctic Ocean,

* In one of the quaint Russian epics with which Florence Hapgood has made us familiar, Yermak is represented as asking to be sent against the Tartars. His modest requirements were "an heroic steed, a coat of chain mail of 90 poods (nearly 1½ tons) and a mace of equal weight."

and now the spirit of unrest was to seize upon a pioneer of Russian blood and urge him on to deeds of similar daring. YERMAK, like the river pirate he was, proceeded by boats, dragging them overland from stream to stream. His firearms had as much effect on the natives he met with as had ROBINSON CRUSOE'S on FRIDAY, and thus he made up for the small numbers of his force. There was a great deal of fighting with the natives, but the Tobol was descended in due time, and the adventurers found themselves afloat on the Irtish. On one occasion when face to face with a large force and despondency uppermost in the minds of his followers, YERMAK showed them that retreat was useless as all the rivers would be frozen long before they could get back, and the result was a vigorous attack on their Tartar foe followed by a complete victory. They were then enabled to establish themselves on the banks of the Irtish for the winter, the great difficulty being of course a sufficient food supply. The following spring witnessed a consolidation of the Cossack's power, and a reinforcement of

some 500 archers. Two years later, in a night attack the intrepid explorer and his men were overwhelmed by the Tartars, YERMAK being dragged down by his armour as he was trying to escape by swimming.

This did not bring to an end the Russian advance. YERMAK was gone, but his work and above all his example remained, and so with varying fortune, and much danger from the fiercer tribes in the south, Russia kept her hold on Western Siberia, the skill of her Cossacks in river work being of especial value in such a well watered country. To avoid the furious southern tribes, "Eastward Ho" became the cry, travel being much facilitated by the almost interlacing tributaries of the great streams flowing north to the Arctic ocean. Nobody but a Russian could have withstood the rigorous climate. Dangers of other sorts also were neither few nor far between. Still the men advanced, at times with rapidity, anon with much deliberateness. On reaching the Yenesei they came into contact with the Tunguses, and, on ascending the river, with the Buriats,

who were much too strong and independent to be interfered with at that stage. Hence it was that the course still held eastward, and some ten years later the Lena was reached. "Difficulties and dangers increased all the time; the enormous distances were no longer measured by versts but by days' journey; the nearest settlers were often a hundred versts apart, and provisions had sometimes to be brought from an *ostrog* (fort) a thousand miles away." The early settlers carried their lives in their hands just as our backwoodsmen did in their struggles with the Indians and in such positions we find them in the first quarter of the 17th century.

"The Russians have now stretched almost across the northern part of the continent. Tobolsk, Yenisseisk, and Yakutsk marked the main stations in the long route traversing the three great rivers; but there was no halt in the rapid advance; the sea alone could stop their impetuous progress." Expeditions were made on the rivers towards the Arctic Ocean and along its shores, some of the

ventures coming to sad grief owing to the severity of the climate, lack of experience and want of food. In 1636, however, the Pacific was reached and some years later a fort established at Okhotsk. It had thus taken the Cossacks 55 years only not merely to cross, but to a certain extent to subjugate, the vast territory lying between the Ural mountains and the Pacific Ocean. They collected tribute in furs, and their *ostrogs* though widespread must have been wonderfully efficient as peace-preservers amongst some of the tribes. The character of the Cossack had however deteriorated. Half a savage himself, and far removed from all control, "God being too high, and the Czar too far," he was at times guilty of excesses which would have been a disgrace to the most degraded of the tribes he subjugated. True to his instinct, however, he had gone on east by north from Kieff 50° N. to Vladimir and Moscow 55° N., then to Tobolsk and Yeneseisk 58° N. and so to Yakutsk, 62° N. It took the Anglo-Saxon race a full century to cross Australia,

and the Americans double that time to cross a much easier country from the Atlantic to the Pacific, while in little over half a century the Cossack was established on its Asiatic shore in spite of every difficulty, climate and otherwise. It was a great achievement, and it is no wonder that in Siberia the name of YERMAK, the pioneer, is held in high estimation. For the second time in history an empire extended from Central Europe to the shores of the Pacific: that of GENGHIS KHAN having done so in the middle ages. The Russian, however, ran parallel to the Tartar, and several degrees further north. Later on we shall see how, gradually, the growing colossus of the north began to press on his southern neighbours. As yet, however, in all the millions of square miles of territory there were only some 70,000 settlers all told.

The victory gained had been a triumph of human endurance over climatic conditions, which no other country save perhaps part of the Hudson Bay territory could equal. For it must be carefully remembered

that in order to avoid contact with the more numerous and stronger tribes in the south, the Cossack explorers had kept to the central and northern districts where they were exposed to all the rigors with which a Siberian winter threatens frail humanity. The soil never thaws except on the top even in the summer, productions are scanty, distances immense. Foes were at hand, and help far distant. Hardships though extreme, were borne with a manliness which commands respect, and an amount of cheerfulness which calls forth admiration. The Cossack succeeded because he deserved to succeed. He won his battle with Nature because he fought her with the weapons of which she herself is most proud, pluck, perseverance, and dogged endurance. His devotion to his superiors may be unreasoning and not too intelligent, but from what we have seen, the Cossack as a foe would be an ugly customer in competent hands.

III.—HOW RUSSIA GOT THE AMUR.

WE have seen with what wonderful rapidity the wandering Cossack found his way from West to East Siberia ; it now remains to trace his descent from the icy wastes of the centre and north to the comparatively warm lands of the south whence rumours of a great river soon reached his ears, a river whose basin abounded in cattle, and whose inhabitants "even tilled the soil."

Various small expeditions were made, the first to be successful in reaching the Amur being that of POYARKOFF in 1644. "The natives were surprised at the tall stature, thick beards, and long hair of the Cossacks, and frightened by their firearms, so POYARKOFF was able to proceed without danger." He sailed down to the junction of the Amur

with the Sungari, and after a halt continued his course past the junction of the Ussuri, and so on to the mouth of the river, where winter overtook the party. Drifting with the current, they had taken two months to reach the sea. When summer returned, they made their way after incredible hardships by sea to Okhotsk. The intrepid explorer reported the conquest of the Amur an easy task, but nothing further under state direction was done for some time.

Private enterprise, however, in the person of PAVLOFF KHABAROFF took up the task. From the position of a peasant he had raised himself to that of a successful trader, and being able to write—not an every day accomplishment in Siberia at that time—has left behind him an authentic account of his adventure. Descending the Urka, a tributary of the Amur, KHABAROFF reached the great river in 1650. He found the towns on the banks deserted, the inhabitants apparently fearing an attack from the Russian party. But as the force numbered only about 70 all told, it was evidently not on warlike thoughts

intent. He returned, however, with redoubled strength, and descending the river again, took various towns, and found himself confronted for the first time by Chinese. Continuing his descent he reached the junction with the Sungari, living on the way by plunder. On the 24th September he arrived at the mouth of the Ussuri, and immediately set about the construction of a fort which afterwards was hotly besieged. KHABAROFF and his men made an heroic defence, but found it prudent to retreat in the spring of 1652. A party sent in search having missed him, probably by taking a different channel, continued their way to the sea. The subsequent history of KHABAROFF is something like that of COLUMBUS. He was tried in Moscow, what for is not known, but more fortunate than his prototype, was at length acquitted, restored to honour, and sent as the governor of a district to the Lena. His name lives in that of one of the most thriving of Siberian towns—Khabarovsk.

Meanwhile other expeditions under various leaders and adventurers had

come into such contact with Chinese force that the Russians were defeated, though they returned again and again. The treaty of Nerchinsk (1689), however, provided for the relinquishment by Russia of all claim to the Amur, and it was nearly a couple of centuries later before a new move was made. It was one of those cases which are by no means unknown in English history, where the boldness of the pioneer is sacrificed to bureaucratic indifference.

* * * * *

Frontier troubles with the Chinese marked the period of Russian inaction in Siberia, but they did not attract the attention they deserved owing to the unsettled state of Europe and the wars in which Russia was involved with Poland and Sweden. So time went on. We come to the nineteenth century, and the appointment in 1847 of MURAVIEFF to be Governor-General of Eastern Siberia. Thirty-eight years of age only, energetic, prompt, and untiring, he fully justified the confidence the CZAR reposed in him. Amongst his helpers he appointed

Captain NEVELSKOY of the brig *Baikal*. The Governor-General travelled by land, the sailor by sea, and they next met on the Pacific coast a year later. Petropaulofsk on the Kamtschatkan coast was fortified and gave a good account of itself in the Crimean War. But a port closed during the greater part of the year was evidently not in an ideal situation, and it was decided to re-open the Amur question. Surveys were made. Saghalien was found to be an island not a peninsula—a piece of information the Russians kept to themselves, and thereby saved a squadron which the British thought they had bottled up in the channel as safely as the Spaniards were last year at Santiago! The mouth of the Amur was examined, and a post established at Nikolaiefsk in August, 1850. The SALISBURY of his day, NESSELRODE, was much perturbed at this daring departure, and did everything possible to repudiate it. A compromise was effected at length—a very British expedient—Nikolaiefsk “was to be considered as belonging to the Russo-American Company!”

No sooner was this arranged than MURAVIEFF began to prepare for the more serious task—the acquirement of the river itself. He reorganized the Siberian military system, raised local forces, and despatched NEVELSKOY on other exploring expeditions. The Chinese in the meantime had ceased to trouble themselves about the territory on the Amur, and so, in 1852, De Castries bay on the Gulf of Tartary was occupied, and the convenient company established a post at Mariinsk. Permission came from the EMPEROR to occupy Saghalien, and thus, with a few corporals' guards, Russia secured her foothold. Nothing but the lethargy of the Russian Foreign Office, and the looming of the war cloud in the west, prevented the vigorous advance of Russia in the East. As it was, NESSELRODE continued to oppose everything, and even condescended to subterfuge in order to prevent MURAVIEFF's plans from being a success. But the Crimean War, so disastrous to Russia in Europe was the cause of her triumph in Asia. The Governor-general determined on a

vigorous defence of Eastern Siberia. The Chinese were fully occupied with the growing power of the T'ai-ping rebels, and MURAVIEFF determined that the Amur should be his line of communication with the coast. The idea was received with enthusiasm. Explanations were sent to the Chinese, and on May 14th, 1854, the expedition on the pioneer steamer *Argun* and a flotilla of boats, started on the voyage down the river. The navigation was difficult, and a month had elapsed before the whole flotilla had reached its destination.

How the disposition of the Russian force, and the mismanagement of the British and French led to no decisive results during the war we need not dwell upon. The successful defence of Petropaulofsk roused much enthusiasm in Russian circles, and strong efforts were made to add to the defensive power of the Pacific coast in view of a still stronger attack. A second expedition was sent down the Amur, four settlements were made on the right bank, and a colony of Cossacks posted on an

island opposite Mariinsk. Various bits of fighting occurred between the allies and the Russians, almost invariably ending in favour of the latter. Indeed from an Asiatic point of view, the war was a Godsend to Russia. Almost in spite of herself, she got from it concessions from the Chinese which she might never otherwise have obtained. In May 1856, the third military expedition descended the river, but it was not till 1858 that the convention of Aigun gave to Russia all she asked, the left bank of the river, and the district included between the Ussuri and the sea. Vladivostock was occupied in 1860, and the third grand chapter of Russian expansion closed in triumph.

IV.—HOW RUSSIA JOCKEYED JAPAN.

WE have now really come down to the history of our own times, but to understand Russian connection with Japan, it will be necessary to cast a glance backward so as to take up the thread of this particular story from its commencement. The outward and visible sign in which Japan first made the acquaintance of the great power destined so fundamentally to affect her future was the form of a Cossack. We have seen how the whole continent was crossed in the short space of 55 years, how the "girdle" of hills which bounded European Russia was passed until there was found another girdle—the restless sea—upon which as yet Russia has made no name. It was then she came face to face with the Japanese in Kamtschatka and the Kurile Islands.

But the Cossacks were few in number, and there is little to chronicle since no attempts at conquest were made in which Japan was interested until the Russian occupation of Saghalien. Then true to her traditional policy never to fight if fighting could be avoided and her end achieved by pacific means, Russia made conventions with Japan in 1853 and 1858, and again in 1867. At that early date she evidently recognized that the Japanese were not to be trifled with to the extent that the Chinese were, for after two attempts to obtain possession of the whole island and making an offer of the Kuriles for the southern section claimed by Japan, it was decided that joint possession should continue, *unoccupied portions to remain open to the colonists of both countries*. In the race for territory thus inaugurated, the island kingdom proved that her sons possess almost Cossack-like activity in colonizing new ground. Subjects of the two countries were constantly coming into contact, but, says a recent writer, "the confusion caused by the extraordinary diplomatic definition gave

rise to no collision between the rival detachments. This mutual forbearance was probably due to the good temper of the two races." Doubtless other reasons could be found were they looked for, but it is not worth while at this period to examine too closely. Later on, in 1875, an agreement was come to by which, in exchange for the Kuriles, Japan gave up to Russia her share in the Pacific Long Island.

Nothing further of importance occurred to alter the relations of the two countries until the outbreak of the war with China in 1894. The development of Eastern Siberia and the Amur districts had, however, been watched by observant eyes. What was this people who had come from the land of the setting to disturb people in the land of the rising sun? The Japanese knew more of them than China had ever done. Was there not in PETER THE GREAT'S time a batch of Japanese students in St. Petersburg? And could not the Japanese of that day put two and two together with quite as much mathematical exactitude as they can to-day? What was

the object of that stronghold threatening their western shore? Why should there be a stronghold where there never was one before? And why such intense longing for knowledge of the Korean Coast whose bays were ice free the whole year round? These bays were only a few hours sail from their native land, and the Japanese had a right to be inquisitive. They had profited by their contact with the west. There was something in them that responded in a moment to the touch of European civilization. Whether it was vanity, love of change, patriotism, or what not, matters little. The shock which stupified her neighbour only roused Japan into the exercise of all her energy. Wisely, warily, and well did she set herself the task of preparing for the stupendous duties before her. She cast her old world learning with her old world armour to the moles and to the bats knowing full well that the most modern of weapons and defences are valueless without *men* behind them. The world in general knew nothing of all this. Now and again a military visitor would write

an account of what he saw, a training ship would at intervals put into Shanghai and astonish the volunteers at the range by the shooting her men could do. That was all that the outer world knew, and there were at least 75 per cent of the foreigners in Far Cathay who backed China to win when war was declared in 1894.

But they reckoned without their host. From the first shot that was fired until the signatures had dried on the text of the treaty of Shimonoseki, the advance of Japan was a triumphal progress, slow at times for sufficient reasons, but never faltering, never turning back. The world looked on almost in speechless astonishment. Even those who knew what to expect were not prepared for perfection or its semblance. When British officers who witnessed the invasion of Korea said they had never seen anything like it before for organization, foresight, and skill, people began to realize that a new great power had arisen, and this conviction was deepened day by day as it became more and more evident that to organization was added strategy,

and to strategy fighting power of equally high order.

We do not propose even to outline the story of the war. Its events are too recent to need recapitulation. Suffice it to say that by the end of January 1895, China was driven out of Korea, was retreating within her own territory, and that with Port Arthur and Weihaiwei in their hands, and their navy re-inforced with the captured remnants of the Chinese fleet, Japan was in a position to march upon Peking and there was no Chinese power that could be depended upon to stop her.

What, however, was impossible to the gung-fu corps and banner bearers of China is a simple matter both to the historian and the plenipotentiary, and here upon the threshold of his triumphant march we bid the island commander halt a moment while we consider the reasons for the struggle. Japan, taking the broadest view, was not at war with one nation only but with three—Korea, China, and Russia, with a section of the first as an ally of the second, with the third indirectly through the other two.

Korea is the Poland of the East. For decades she has been an almost insufferable nuisance, and nothing but her position has so long saved her from the fate which must ultimately overtake her. She is not so conveniently divisible as Poland or her independence would have gone to its well-deserved grave long since. To prevent her being entirely the cat's paw of China, or of Russia, was one reason why Japan drew the sword. There was selfishness in the act, of course. All political action is selfish, more or less. But Japan's declaration that her object was the freedom of Korea from the Chinese yoke, was Korean independence in fact, sufficed with other considerations to keep Russian action within its traditional limits. Russia could wait. She did wait, and when Japan had proved her own prowess, had demonstrated the decrepit condition of the Chinese giant whose state she had correctly diagnosed long before, had, as we have seen, her armies ready to march upon Peking, had made an honourable peace and secured, as she thought the fruit of her victories, then Russia re-

appeared—not alone, that might have involved fighting—but with two friends France and Germany, and these three giants blandly suggested to the triumphant little conqueror, that he should act upon their advice and give up what he had won “with his sword and with his bow!” It was a bitter moment, and for many a year to come the taste of it will return again and again to Japanese palates. But even fate bows to the inevitable. Japan gave way. Liaotung was handed back to China for a consideration, and, with the loss of Formosa only, the Celestial Empire felt for the time being that it had been saved by its three Western friends. That there should be a day of reckoning not long delayed the Chinese did not pause to consider. But it came only too speedily. A couple of German missionaries met their death in Shantung. What monument so fitting, so poetic, and so promising for the life that now is as the German flag flying over the soil consecrated by their blood! To think was to act. Kiaochow was seized and the first sphere of action like the bombshell it was

began the work of disintegration. Russia was honestly alarmed at this sudden episode, and not merely alarmed but angry. But there was no need to quarrel with Germany who is strong, when "compensation" could be got for the asking from China who is weak. Thus it happened that within three years of the ratification of the treaty of Shimonoseki, the Russians were in possession of Port Arthur.

V.—THE SIBERIAN RAILWAY.

WITH all her good points, and they are many, Russia is woefully behind the rest of Europe in almost everything except perhaps matters military. From the latest statistics it is seen that with all her immense territory in Europe, and notwithstanding the feverish haste with which at times she has worked to complete her strategic network of frontier lines before the long-looked-for war should come, she has but 24,000 miles of railway, including those of Finland, as against 21,000 miles for the superficially insignificant British Isles, 29,000 for Germany, 25,000 for France, and 182,000 for the United States, which alone can boast a larger area.

To the European system must now be added some 2,000 miles more for

Siberia already constructed, and with the stimulus of recent events this total will probably increase very rapidly.

It was an Englishman named DULL who first suggested the Siberian road. His proposal was to make a horse tramway of it, but though ever since 1850 patriotic Russians dreamed of a trans-continental track, nothing definite was arranged for its actual construction till 1891, in which year the present CZAR, then CZAREWITCH, cut the first sod of the Pacific section at Vladivostock. The world has hardly realised as yet the immensity of the task Russia has set herself, a task which a Japanese officer who has travelled over the ground thinks she may even yet abandon! The Canadian-Pacific stretches from ocean to ocean, but a Canadian-Pacific train might run its full course and back again, and then fall a good deal short of a single journey across the Siberian-Pacific. Four sixes mark mnemonically the distance from St. Petersburg to Vladivostock by the old overland route—6666 miles.

Of this the section from Perm to Tiumen was opened in 1880, and since then work has so far advanced that the next section terminating at Irkutsk was opened last year. (1898).

No great difficulties were encountered in the earlier portions. There was a great deal of bridging required, and some of the spans were long, but nothing of stupendous importance occurred till the bridging of the Irish had to be taken in hand. Mr. W. DURBAN, in the *Contemporary Review*, gives the length of this work as four miles! But when Lake Baikal was reached trouble began. What was to be done with a fresh water lake, of the length of England, frozen hard in winter, subject to storms and fogs in summer, and lying right across the track of the line? Various proposals were suggested: amongst them a circumlacustrine loop line as opposed to the steam ferry arrangement to be copied from American experience. The latter was at first decided on, only it seems to be abandoned after a good deal of money had been wasted over it. At present the circum-Baikalian loop is in favour again, and

respecting this, *Vladimir* writes, "The circum-Baikalian line offers enormous difficulties; it has to run along the shore between the lake and the mountains, often steep and rocky; numerous torrents have to be crossed by strong bridges; and when the country becomes flat it is often marshy, great detours have to be taken as may be perceived from the fact that in one case the road can be shortened by 30 versts (a verst is about five-eighths of a mile) by cutting a proposed tunnel of 4,710 yards. But Russian engineers are not familiar with tunnel-making, and avoid the task if possible."

This by no means exhausts the chapter of difficulties. There are others peculiar to the Trans-Baikal section, there are many common to all. The climatic difficulties are immense, the ground in places is frozen to a depth of 24 ft. of which only about half thaws during the summer, floods have done incalculable damage by washing away whole stretches of the road already completed, and finally the track frequently leads through a forest region where every necessary

of life, except firewood, has to be brought from weary distances. The balance of opinion, however, seems to show that the greatest of all enemies to the line is neither physical nor climatic, but moral. It is acknowledged that the Russians have copied the American system rather than the British, and hence solidity of structure would not in any case be carried to an excess. But when to American flimsiness there is added Russian "squeezing" the result is calamitous. The Japanese officer's opinion referred to above is to the effect that Russia will never be able to convey troops and materials of war over the line! He declares that riding over it is like being on board a vessel in a lively sea. Now this statement of the Japanese is borne out by another from the correspondent of the *Etoile Belge* at St. Petersburg. Writing to his paper he says, "the works have been executed in a manner which shows very little conscience. Everything, or nearly everything, will have to be done over again before the authorities can think of opening this gigantic line to regular working. In

very many places the road gives way on the passage of a train a little heavier than usual or travelling at a speed of twenty miles an hour, and accidents more or less grave are continually happening. More than usual courage is demanded of any one undertaking a journey on this railway. This construction *a la Russe* has already swallowed up hundreds of millions of roubles, or to speak more truthfully, the constructors, and not the construction have absorbed the millions. People are beginning to ask how it will finish." A *Times* correspondent writes in precisely the same strain of the Manchurian section.

It is but fair to say that Mr. DURBAN takes a more optimistic view. He says "the line is much more solidly constructed than is generally supposed." The enquiry as to the date of completion is not yet answerable. Various estimates are given up to ten years, but if money holds out, and the political world continues disturbed a much less period than that ought to suffice, always supposing the adverse critics to have over stated their case. The Far Eastern

resident who has been dazzled at the possibility of reaching London in nine days from Shanghai will however have to wait for the realization of such a glorious consummation. There can be no fast travel over shaky lines.

Of course the plans for the Amur and eastern sections have been entirely reconstituted since Russia has acquired the right to pass through Manchuria. The branch will probably leave the original track at Kaidalovo, a place between Chita and Nerchinsk. It was at first intended to take in Khaila, Tsitsihar, Petuna, Kirin, Moukden and Port Arthur, connecting with Newchwang with a short branch line, but recent accounts state that going northward Kirin is to be left on the right, and a more direct route taken to Tsitsihar. It was hoped that the abandonment of the long Amur détour would have reduced expenses somewhat, but at the moment there seems to be but little hope of that, the latest estimate reaching the enormous grand total of eighty millions sterling.

The suggestion that a branch should

connect with Peking raised somewhat of a storm. But it is not a new thing for capitals to be connected by railways with other places. St Petersburg is so joined with Berlin, and Berlin with Paris, and though matters are somewhat different in the Far East, it is difficult to see any just cause or impediment why the Peking branch should not be made provided the nations interested have a sufficiently distinct understanding with the maker. Railways to Peking must come at some time or other. Why not sooner rather than later? There is a great section of the world which can view any new movement only from a strategic point of view, forgetting that history has merely been punctuated by wars. Its real narrative consists not of the records of fighting, but of the growth of trade, manufacture, and general social progress. If therefore Russia persists in her demand for the Peking branch, as she probably will, we would ask—proper precautions having been taken—why not?

It is interesting to note that HENRY NORMAN in his *Far East*

thought the Pacific terminus of the Great Siberian line would be Port Lazareff, unless Russia got Port Arthur *in alliance with Japan*. Russia has Port Arthur in defiance of, not in alliance with, Japan. Its acquisition was the crowning result of that tripartite interference which Japan can neither forget nor forgive. But having it, the successful completion of the line, cost what it may, is sure.

VI.—HOW THE RAILWAY MAY
AFFECT IT.

WHETHER England or America, Germany or Japan may like it or lump it, there is a great future for Russia in the Far East. A spirit of true imperial expansion pervades the Muscovite. It is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. Hitherto he has had no difficulty to speak of in indulging it. Like all natural forces he has proceeded along the lines of least resistance. A mistake or two caused a set back in South-Eastern Europe, but even at the darkest hour of the Crimean War, expansion was, as we have seen, going merrily on on the Pacific coast and the basin of the Amur. We shall have to consider in a subsequent chapter what are to be the limits of this expansion. Meanwhile it is well to look facts fairly in

the face, and, so far as Englishmen are concerned, to come to an early decision upon the possibilities and impossibilities of the case.

We are told that the great road is to "create a new Siberia," that its completion will make it "the most potent of the civilizing factors of the twentieth century," and that as a "vast repository of undeveloped resources" Siberia, opened up as it will be, must be an ever increasing factor in the history of the world's progress. Already visitors to the Nijni-Novgorod Exhibition have been amazed at the evidences of Siberian wealth. The popular opinion that Siberia is a land of eternal frost and ice, where mercury freezes, and the sun takes a six months' holiday has been derived from that region alone which borders the Arctic, the land of the Tundras or marshes, frozen solid in winter, and swarming with mosquitoes in summer. There is a belt to the south of this covered with primeval forests of which no man knows the bounds or the value. The railway will bring this vast surface mine of wealth within

reach. But it is to the third or southern belt that the authorities will look for their main traffic. A glance at the map will show that lower, or southern, Siberia is abundantly watered. As a consequence it possesses some of the finest grazing land in existence. The climate corresponds with that of portions of Canada, and the soil both arable and pasture is capable of turning what now are sparsely peopled wastes into one of the greatest granaries of the world, and one of the chief sources of dairy supply. Grapes thrive in the open air, and abundance of other fruit may be successfully grown.

Commercially therefore the outlook is a rosy one. Time will be needed for development, but it is difficult to see what limit can be put to it when once growth has fairly begun. At the moment the population of the whole of this vast region is less than that of London. A single Chinese province could lose a larger number without missing them. Space for development therefore is practically unlimited. But the first of all questions in connection with the commer-

cial side is—Will the line pay? Wages are low in Russia, or it would be impossible to carry out the schemes which the authorities seem to think desirable. Between the Urals and Tomsk for example, we are told that the trains now running are “never out of sight of the guards” stationed along the line. In that section alone they number 4000 men, who are, of course, entirely unproductive consumers. The carriages are broader (5ft. gauge) and higher than the British, and the arrangements at the railway restaurants on the way have attained a height of luxury unknown in European lands. So says Mr. DURBAN. But all these things will be of no avail unless the authorities can carry freight at rates which shall be at once remunerative and bearable by the pioneer producers. Too high a tariff rate would as effectually stifle progress as a prohibitory export duty. Herein lies the initial difficulty. Can the Russian Government stand for an indefinite series of years a steady drain on its resources, and if so, will it be willing? That the answer must be in

the affirmative is most probable. Having put her hand to the plough Muscovite tenacity of purpose will see that there is no looking back. And that being so, with Talienwan a *bona fide* free port, the opening of the Siberian Railway will indeed be all that enthusiasts have prophesied concerning it, an eventual source of untold wealth for Russia, and incidentally a blessing to the general commerce of the world.

Passengers to Western Europe are promised rapid transit at very cheap rates. As low as nine days for the London-Shanghai trip is the latest estimate, though fifteen would probably be nearer the mark. Russian changes favour long journeys, the fare per mile for distances over 2640 miles (4000 versts) being less than a farthing per mile. The railways are "administered for the convenience of the public and not for private speculation."

Politically the effect of the line can easily be over-estimated, except as regards China and Japan, upon whom its power *may* be very great indeed. In a quarrel with England it would

have no more than a very secondary influence. Even with Japan it by no means follows that Russia would be master of the situation. With a line of such enormous length, it is impossible even with all the power and resources of autocratic Russia to safeguard every yard of the track. Its great length is strategically its great weakness. A few charges of dynamite properly applied and repeated at sufficiently frequent intervals would paralyse it just as it was most needed. During peace time, however, it would be a certain route for reinforcements in view of possible contingencies, and thus would add weight to Russian diplomacy at critical moments. That it will very materially affect the balance of power however, does not appear probable, for that must ever depend largely upon command of the sea which neither Japan nor Great Britain is ever likely to allow to pass into Russian hands. That its moral effect may be greater than the material is much more likely, and this may suit Muscovite purpose equally well. It is wise to remember that Russia does not want war. Her

whole history, especially the Far Eastern portion of it, proves that. She has her objects, she keeps them steadfastly in view, she pursues them continuously, but as soon as the pursuit leads her against a wall of any thickness, she does not incontinently knock her head against it. She waits until the effect of time, weathering, and judicious undermining have done their share. Then the wall falls of its own accord and she enters the hitherto forbidden land as JOSHUA entered Jericho. In all the wordy warfare of the past few years there was never any fear of fighting except such as might have been caused by the vacillating policy of the British Foreign Office, which first threw an ice-free port at Russia's head and then snarled and growled at her for picking it up. Had the British policy been a tithe as far-seeing and as consistent as the Russian the "excursions and alarms" of recent years would never have taken place, there would have been less bad blood, and we should not be in the position we hold to-day in which there is assured neither peace nor honour.

The country upon which the Siberian Railway will have most effect will be Russia herself. Foiled in gaining free access to the sea in the South-East of Europe she has attained her object in a totally different sphere. Her self-respect will be enhanced, her fever for expansion may well give place to one for internal development, a consummation devoutly to be wished, for as "no man liveth to himself," so no country can enrich itself without at the same time doing good to others. It is only the short sightedness of ignorance which sulks at others' success. Little by little Russia will become more and more an Asiatic power. How far her aspirations in that respect will clash with those of other nations remains to be considered. She has her rivals, England of old standing, Japan of recent years, Germany of yesterday, America of to-day. It will be interesting to see how far they will bring about modifications in her future policy.

VII.—RUSSIA v. ENGLAND.

It is a comparatively simple task to write a story, so long as its chapters merely follow the course of current events. The interesting narrative which has traced the Russians from the Danube to the Gulf of Pechili is not unlike certain stories in our own history. With "Expansion" as its motto, success has crowned its chronicle. When, however, we come to consider the conflicting claims of the great world empires the task is a much more difficult one. Special pleading would be worse than useless, prejudice fatal. We have to try to dissociate ourselves entirely from all preconceived notions, to look the position squarely in the face, to note accomplished facts, and to consider not merely what is advisable and from a utopian point of view even highly desirable, but what is possible

of achievement. There are more factors in the Far Eastern question to-day than would have been dreamt of ten years ago. Next to China herself there rank Japan, Great Britain, and Russia. Then come Germany, the United States, France, and Italy. All these have a voice, some a very potent voice, in the shaping of the destiny of this great land.

For the present we confine ourselves to the Anglo-Russian question. It is not possible to compress our consideration of this side of our subject within the narrow limits which have bounded our outline of its previous history, since, to prevent any merely local view, the Yellow Sea, so far as England and Russia are concerned, is far too closely connected with the Baltic, the great wall of China with that of the Himalayas, and the sick man of Europe with his double in Asia. The points of contact between British and Russian territory and trade are so many that any breach of the good understanding at present existing would be world-wide in its effects. There is

every reason, therefore, why in the interests of both states such a misfortune should be avoided. *Vis-a-vis* Russia, England is viewed from very different standpoints. There is the British Jingo, who sees in Russia an ogre intent on grasping the universe, and particularly desirous of seizing upon India as a *hors d'œuvre* to whet his appetite. Then we have the hypnotised Briton of the STEAD type who, having been dazzled by a too close approach to the Imperial presence, sees nothing but the glamour of St. Petersburg, and is optically incapable of appreciating even the foreground visible from the British position. It is to neither of these that we, in the Far East, should turn for guidance at such period as the present. We desire neither to cringe nor to arrogate. Despite her millions of armed men we have no intention of bowing the knee to Russia, nor of sawning obsequiously upon her in the hope that the tactics of the lick-spittle may reap the reward of the sycophant. Notwithstanding the crushing superiority of our fleet we do not want to bully, to dictate, nor to lord

it over her in any way. We condemn the bluster of the Jingo on the one side, we refuse to dance attendance upon Mr. STEAD on the other. It is much more manly, in our opinion, to treat Russia neither as a hateful foe, nor as a flattered friend, but simply as a nation with whom we would willingly be at peace for the sake of the vast trade we do with her.

For nearly fifty years we have been on more or less bad terms with the Colossus of the North. It was entirely our own fault. As Lord SALISBURY has told us, "we put our money on the wrong horse" in the Crimean war, an initial blunder which has been prolific of evil consequences. If it had been really necessary that Russia should be kept out of Constantinople, it was the business of Germany and Austria to have kept her out. England might well have been neutral in such a dispute. Russia has never been a menace to Great Britain. That she hangs over Central Europe like an undermined cliff ready to fall at a moment's notice is true enough. That Germany and Austria may be

desirous of standing well with her, especially now that she can, with the aid of France, attack them in front and rear, is only reasonable ; but that we should worry over other people's difficulties is surely an act of supererogation. Circumstances, moreover, have changed since Crimean days. Germany is well able to take care of herself, and having become keenly interested in Turkey and Asia Minor may safely be left to watch over Central European interests in the south-east. England is in Egypt with a sufficiently strong seat to prevent any other power from turning her out. If, therefore, Russia made another move towards the Golden Horn it would be Germany, Austria and the Balkan States upon whom would devolve the duty of checking her.

It has been pointed out more than once that Muscovite attacks upon, or rather demonstrations against, British interests have always been replies. A disturbance on the Afghan frontier has been the sequel to an anti-Russian move in Asia Minor or elsewhere. Russia has been driven into an

attitude of antagonism to England, and that against her will. Illustrative of the warmth of feeling with which Russians who visit England sometimes view her, there is a well-known story of a Russian diplomatist, who, after praising England in the highest terms exclaimed "*C'est une nation sublime.*"

This was not altogether agreeable to a Frenchman present, who retorted with NAPOLEON'S saying "*Du sublime au ridicule il n'y a qu'un pas.*"

"Quite so," replied the Russian, "*Le Pas de Calais!*" It is the almost unanimous verdict of travellers intimate with Russia and her people that there is a widespread regard for England, for her language, her literature, and her general culture amongst them. Where it is seemingly absent, it is but hidden under the pique and ill-humour which results from a long-continued persistence in what we have so warmly resented in the case of France—pin-pricks. We put up with a long series of these because, though the French would not believe it, we really had developed a genuine liking and regard for them.

The Russian has done the same with England, and for the same reason. The parallel may hold still further, though at the moment it is difficult to see where an English Fashoda is to arise. Fortunately, it seems unlikely that there will be any reason for further misunderstanding of a grave nature. Russia and Great Britain were apparently intended by nature to be rather co-operative than antagonistic. The greatest land power should be the friend and ally of the greatest sea power in all that pertains to the peaceful development of the earth. Neither can seriously harm the other. Russia would but shatter her strength against the N.W. frontier of India; British ironclads could never take St. Petersburg. The race antagonism which sets the Russian against the Teuton does not divide us: we have grave differences in the form of Government, but that has no weight in commercial affairs when, as in the Anglo-Russian case, each has so much to exchange with the other.

So much for general considerations. To come to the particular point in

question. Is it necessary or desirable that England and Russia should be at enmity in the Far East? We hold that it is not. What does Great Britain want in the Far East? Trade. Will she have more of it or less of it by Russian expansion? That is the crucial question. Statistics show that the trade of the Celestial Empire ought to grow tenfold. Mr. ARCHIBALD LITTLE tells us so. Our Consuls say so; so do the Customs' authorities. Why has it not done so? We know why. Native corruption and incompetence in high quarters have been in the way. Up to the present, Russian influence has done no more than open up Manchuria, but already it is certain that ere many years are over the volume of British trade with that province will be greater than ever before. Should we then resent the occupation which brings about such a result? Russian apologists say "No."

But it will be said that there is no guarantee that the trade privileges which now exist, and which are promised for the future *will* continue. People point to Batoum, and profess

small faith in promises hailing from St. Petersburg. We have much sympathy with this feeling, though Mr. STEAD says it should not exist. Great Britain as holder of seventy-five per cent. of China's trade has an undeniable right to demand stipulations from any new comer with a view to the protection of that trade. More than that, *she owes it to her people and especially to her eastern merchants, that she shall, even at the cost of war, defend their interests if attacked in any way whatsoever except by fair and open competition.*

The mere occupation of a secondary base of doubtful value at Weihaiwei is next to useless. It is not fresh addition to our strength that we need, but the use of that we already possess. That, in few words, is our position upon the Far East question. We should care comparatively little if there were a change of occupants in certain Chinese provinces, but whoever holds them, we should insist with all the power at our disposal, moral and material, upon retaining all the rights and privileges that we at present enjoy. We say "privi-

leges," but in fact England has no privileges in the strict sense of the term. What is open to her is open to all. In such a stand we should have the good will of the United States, of Germany, and Japan, and if history teaches anything at all, it teaches with all possible clearness that Russia would not dream of trying to stand against such a combination.

If therefore Lord SALISBURY'S government will look the China problem fairly in the face, they will find no need to indulge in further pin-pricks against Russia, while at the same time there should be an equally clear understanding on the other side, that except in the way of open competition British interests are everywhere to be respected in accordance with the treaties already concluded.

"At the expense of war" is a phrase which has been used more than once by British Statesmen. So long as it is not mere empty sound, so long may we expect fair-treatment. We fight for every trader and manufacturer on the face of the earth, be he British, German, American, or

Japanese when we stand up for treaty rights. There need be no insane jealousy of Russia or of France; it is not territory but trading rights that we wish to conserve, and when it is understood, not merely supposed as a possibility, that any attack upon them will be taken as a *casus belli* there will be the basis of an understanding which may benefit not merely Russia and England but other nations too. Germany wants trade as much as we, the United States equally so. To Japan it is a *sine qua non* of her continued existence as a power. We may then take it for granted that we shall hear little of any further Russian expansion or restrictions of trade for some time to come. With Talienwan a free port, the railway will probably multiply Manchurian commerce enormously. Of course it has to be remembered that a CZAR'S Rescript may be nullified by the CZAR'S underlings, and in any case Russia can only declare the port free for the period of her lease. For the present, however, our obvious duty is to wait events with a watchful eye, to avoid undignified protests and un-

backed recrimination, at the same time being ready at a moment's notice to throw our whole weight into the scale against any nation which tries in any but legitimate ways to oust us from our markets.

The *Saturday Review* has well said "There is ample room in Asia for Russia and England, but there is no room for a power which does not know its own mind."

VIII.—RUSSIA *v.* JAPAN.

WE have given it as our fixed opinion that so far there has been no cause of war between Russia and England in the Far East, and that there need be none in the future if England do but know her mind and see that other nations know it too. With Japan it is altogether different. Had she been stronger at sea, she would, without a shadow of doubt, have fought Russia in 1895 or 1896. Russia has deliberately placed herself across the path of the rising power of the Far East. Rightly or wrongly she has uttered her warning, "Thus far shalt thou go and no farther," the limit being insular. Rightly or wrongly, Russia and Japan have conflicting aims. Personally one may be of opinion that continental acquisition would have been as detrimental to Japan as possession of Hanover would be to

the Britain of 1899. However that may be, and irritating as the existence of a Korean Poland has long been, Japan cannot tamely acquiesce in further Russian aggrandisement. The Colossus would become too overpowering were he to overrun Korea as he has done Manchuria; and some day or other the gallant little Japs would have to cross swords with their Muscovite foe. It may not be far distant, this event. Japan has her navy nearly ready, and the Siberian railway is not yet made. There is the possibility of a quarrel, though as we have seen it will not be Russia that will precipitate it. Her policy for the present is peace and development. Probably only one event could force the hand of the CZAR, as the seizure of Kiaochow did, and that is the conclusion of an alliance between the two yellow races. Much nonsense has been written and talked respecting this possible re-dealing of the Far Eastern cards. Those who ridicule it as being altogether outside the bounds of possibility fail to see the arguments in its favour. Few nations, except Russia and her

jackal, France, are likely to whine or growl much in prospect of it. There is indeed not a little to urge in its behalf provided it gets the support of the three great trading nations. Russia will inevitably object, and, objecting, may think it necessary to carry her bluff a little further than in the recent warning. She sees a possibility of any further expansion southward being for ever checked, and bluffing is as natural to her under the circumstances as success could make it. But with her usual astuteness she will do everything to avoid a breach of the peace. Have not peace tactics paid better in the Far East than war in the East? Is it likely Russia will abandon a policy so successful? But she may make a mistake in her treatment of Japan. At present her alternate cajoling and bullying show that she hardly understands her insular enemy, who though comparatively weak in numbers has the inestimable advantage of being on the spot. Patriotic to a fault, the Japanese have as many military qualities as the Ghorkas and as good a naval organization as Great Britain.

With well over a hundred war vessels, several of them without superiors in their class, they have formidable sea strength, and when once they have attained command on the water we have seen what their land forces can do. It is pretty nearly certain that in any battles between the two forces, the Russians would be outnumbered, and that being so, experience is yet wanting as to what the result would be. The outcome even with the Siberian railway thrown in would be so questionable that no country, much more ready to rush into war than Russia has ever been, would lightly undertake the task. To this fact we must attribute the temporary withdrawal of Russia from Korea, a stroke of policy masterly in foresight and result. To this we may put down all the efforts of the Russian press to prove the identity of Japanese and Russian interests. They deceive no one—least of all the Japanese. But they may, most likely they will, serve their purpose, the tiding over of difficulties to a more convenient season. By and by with Port Arthur impregnable, with yet

more fortifications at Vladivostock, with another hundred thousand troops, and the line at their back for reinforcements, the tone of Russian diplomacy may change. Korea may, nay will, once more come within her sphere of influence and the colossal struggle may begin with better chances for the European.

A recent issue of the *Novoe Vremya* asserts this in plain terms. It says Korea, both by its geographical position, and by its interests, must, like Manchuria, come under the political influence of Russia.

All this is the Jingo side of the question. There is another, which differs not widely from that previously considered with regard to England. Russia may find it to her interest to call a halt—not merely a time serving truce, but a pause of many years, perhaps generations' duration. She may argue that while all her growth has hitherto been without serious opposition, while she has vast territories hardly even surveyed, territories upon which she might employ her best energies for many years to come, any further

advance must bring her into conflict with forces such as she has never yet had to encounter. She may count the cost. It is not at all unlikely that she will. There are indeed endless reasons for her doing so besides the strength of the opposition she would meet with. She is poor, famine and plague stricken, wasted by disease. Her people are ignorant, her resources undeveloped, her finances in disorder, her system of Government discredited. There are millions of Central Asiatics not yet absorbed into her system who might rise against her in an Eastern war. Her European outlets are few in number and easily closed. Finally her great historic aim in these latitudes, or at least one of her aims, has been attained: she has an ice-free port. The promise of Siberian development, as we have seen, is great. There is ample reason why Russia should at any rate "mark time," develop her resources, add to her trade, conciliate her rivals, and at the same time strengthen her position. We are willing to confess that this is the line we expect her to adopt. Nothing

but dire necessity would make her fight now, if ever. She has got all she wanted without firing a shot, why change her tactics? As part and parcel of this programme, she would do her utmost not to hamper or unduly restrict Japanese trade, and as trade must, to modern Japan, be as important as to any Western land, in time old antagonisms may be lived down, new connections fostered, and the fear of war reduced to the smallest of chances. There would then be no more reason why Russia and Japan should fight than there would be of an Anglo-French or Anglo-German conflict.

Should such a misfortune arise, Russia, and Russia alone of the European Powers, could attempt to make, without prohibitive expenditure, an adequate military stand, seeing that Japan could raise at short notice a force of some 300,000 trained men to follow up the blows she struck with her matchless navy. Such being the case, we may be sure that the voice of the MIKADO will reach to the inmost recesses of European Cabinets and his word have due weight in al

Far Eastern Councils. No one need regret this. As a rapidly advancing power, the growth of her trade cannot dwindle. If her aim is to export, she will soon learn as an economic law of the Medo-Persian type that in the long run imports must balance exports. It is to be feared that Japan is more likely to harm herself than her rivals are to harm her. Her sudden rush in the galaxy of Powers has a little upset her equilibrium. She is not altogether happy in her brand-new Parliament; her Western garments do not, as yet, sit upon her as though she were to the manner born. Some of her best friends fear that her "little knowledge" may prove the "dangerous thing," which POPE declared it to be; she has a class of undesirables, the *soshi*, ever ready to raise a disturbance for pay, and the old clan feuds still smoulder, being kept from bursting into flame only by a clever arrangement which divides political power between the rival parties. Japan may therefore fall from her eminence, but her fall will be due rather to her own volcanic energy than to attack from the outside.

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To Great Britain as her natural ally, as her complement, Japan looks for help should help be needed. Englishmen should see to it, that so long as her cause is just she should never look in vain. It is not likely that Japan will pick a quarrel with Russia provided the latter power remains content with present achievements, and does not play too loudly her tune of triumph at Peking. Japan has, as yet, received no serious blow from Russia except perhaps to her *amour propre*. In time she may even come to recognize that exclusion from Liaotung was a blessing in disguise. But as we have indicated, it is possible, even if highly improbable, that Russia may strike a blow at some vital interest of Japan. In that case we do not hesitate to say that England should be found alongside her insular friend. The interests of the two nations are sufficiently alike to make them natural allies. Their forces in the Far East perfect each other. Great Britain at sea and Japan on land have no adequate rivals in the Pacific, and although we anticipate no occasion for any dis-

play of their allied power, there should be a very clear understanding between the cabinets of St. James and Tokyo as to what should happen in certain eventualities. *Our combined rights are great ; our determination to protect them should be proportionate.*

IX.—RUSSIA v. GERMANY,
THE UNITED STATES, AND FRANCE.

How Russia may, if she chooses, and is unwise enough, turn British rivalry into enmity, and Japanese jealousy into war, we have seen in the last two chapters. It now remains to show that these two nations do not stand alone in blocking the southward way of the people of the north. Germany stands first of a trio. It was the playing of the Kiaochao card by Germany which brought out the Russian trump at Port Arthur; it is to Germany that Russian eyes are turned more keenly than to any other European power. Germany avoids pin-pricks, but she is an accomplished poacher, and is sometimes careless and rude enough to tread on other people's corns. For many years past she has been loud in her protestations of regard for Russia; it was a corner-

stone in the Bismarokian policy that on no account was Russia to be estranged. WILHELM the Wonderful, has changed all that. At times, he too, thinks it advisable to pay court to St. Petersburg, but that does not prevent him from visiting Constantinople, Byzantium the Holy, the Mecca of orthodox Russia, and of taking effective measures to undermine Muscovite influence and supplant it with his own. In his eagerness for Teutonic expansion, he surveys the promising provinces of Asia Minor, and plans an iron road from the Levant to the Persian Gulf; he visits the Holy Land, makes speeches at the Holy Places, sets the diplomatic world in a ferment, and all this to the direct detriment, possibly and potentially, of nobody so much as of Russia.

It was no wonder the Dual Alliance became *un fait accompli*. It was long hanging in the balance, and probably had Prince BISMARCK remained in office would never have been the power it is to-day. But Germany was not content with poaching on Russian preserves in Europe: she boldly grabbed a slice of China, a slice of a

provinces long looked upon as being peculiarly fitted for Muscovite dominion—Shantung. In this way was the separation of the two great European neighbours emphasized.

It is well known that German action was intensely distasteful to St. Petersburg. But then Russian action has been intensely distasteful to Berlin. Russia, self-contained, continental, almost outside the natural sphere of conflicting European politics, might well have gone her way heedless of anything beyond her western frontier. Instead of that her recent policy has made her the bugbear of Europe. Threatening Austria with disruption, Roumania, the Balkan States, and Turkey with absorption, Finland with annihilation, and Germany herself with devastating attack, Russia is more responsible for the burdensome armaments of Europe than France. It was all very well for the CZAR to cry Peace and Disarmament; it would have been better, as the *Nineteenth Century* has shown, to have set the example.

Yet with all her preparation, and with all her immense paper power,

Russia wants no war, least of all with Germany. Her influence may have hypnotized France, and her Cossacks frightened Austria, but neither her troops nor her navy can terrorize the Teuton. If any man has studied military history with a purpose, it is the German. If any one living knows the weak points both of friend and foe, it is he; and it may be taken as gospel that in his heart of hearts he knows well enough that an army which needed Roumanian rescue to save it from the Turk some score of years ago has, except with powerful allies, no great terrors for him. Russian corruption is too well known all the world over for any one to have absolute faith in her armaments. The fraud and embezzlement which came to light in the war with Turkey, was such as might have been expected from China, and from time to time since, other cases have been made public in the press notwithstanding the terrors of the censorate. And as any quarrel with Germany over Shantung would not be fought in China but in Western Russia with probably a subsequent

peace dictated at St. Petersburg, we may at once relegate a possible rupture to the limbo of things most unlikely to occur.

More improbable still is it that Russia will come to loggerheads with the United States over Chinese matters. Yet the Americans are beginning to think that their trade in China ought to be defended. They have but just learnt that they have a trade to defend, and they would not dream as yet of firing a gun in anger to prevent Russia from closing every port in the Pacific coast. That is a feeling to come later on, when the Philippines have been pacified and the Far East coast developed. When that is completed, Uncle SAM will think it high time that in the struggle for the open door JOHN BULL will deserve something more than good words and verbal encouragement. In short, a time will come when, as the rivalry between the two sides of the Pacific becomes acute, and the Union-Pacific finds that the Siberian-Pacific is beginning to get the whip-hand of the position, the United States will object as strongly

as Great Britain does now to the arbitrary curtailment of their trade in the interests of their rivals. They will demand with no uncertain voice that the manufacturers of their goods, and the growers of their produce shall not be refused admission to Chinese ports because they do not wear the fur cap of Russia or speak the Gallic tongue. The English argument will be adopted in its entirety. "Your absorption of Chinese territory may not be resented too violently; but don't interfere with our trade."

The future of the Philippines will depend in a very large degree upon the extent to which free trade principles are carried out in the Western Pacific. If a Franco-Russian policy of differential tariffs became the rule all development would be checked, and the most promising ports, so far as English, American, German, and Japanese trade is concerned would be replicas of that egregious failure, Saigon. As no interference with the integrity of China could give power to any nation to abrogate treaties without consent of the contracting parties, we may

confidently expect that the United States, now awakened to a proper sense of the position, will make their voice heard in defence of the *status quo*, and let their cannon make the echo if need be.

We have mentioned France amongst the nations opposed to Russia in the Far East. It seems almost absurd at the moment to pit France against Russia in any way. Has she not given herself up body and soul as Faust to Mephistopheles? Are not her money, her navy, her troops, her diplomacy, at Muscovite command? How then can her interests clash with those of her leader? Yet once upon a time, rather than allow England to take Peking alone, France insisted on joining her. And to-day there are Levantine hopes in French breasts which could not be attained without corresponding Russian disappointment. The presence of Russia in the Mediterranean is the presence of another possible enemy; her aggrandisement at the cost of Austria could hardly be permitted. There are colonial aspirations which clash, and political ideals in direct

antagonism. In fact there are enough elements of discord to justify us in placing France in opposition to her present friend. French claims in Szechuen, her clerical protectorate, her very existence in Asia is as much an incentive to subsequent Russian hostility as the presence of England in India, or of Japan in Korea. There is no doubt but that many Russians have the belief that eventually they are to rule the world, particularly the Asiatic world. The Anglo-Saxon has no right to object to such a belief. He shares it, with an imminent change in the personality of the ruler. But the unprolific Gaul can hardly hope for world dominion, and hence a certain antagonism on his part cannot fail to arise both to Saxon and to Russian. Besides, his merchants are at one with ours in deprecating differential tariffs *which do not favour them*. France has got surprisingly little out of her Russian alliance. She has lent her money, her influence, her name, and got nothing in return. All the kicks and none of the halfpence have fallen to her

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share, and if when once more she
"comes to herself" she finds that
most of the guilt has gone from the
gingerbread, no one need be surprised,
certainly not Russia.

X.—HOW IT AFFECTS CHINA AND THE
PACIFIC GENERALLY.

A GERMAN philosopher has laid down the maxim that "what a state loses in outward importance must be replaced by inward greatness and development," and it has been asserted that already there are signs that Spain may be an instance in which the rule has been put into practical effect. But what of China? That her outward importance has gone irretrievably is but too certain, but where are the evidences of her growth in inward greatness and development? Up to 1894 the whole world accepted China at something approaching her own valuation. Even Russia, well-informed as she usually is, feared that there might be an alliance between Great Britain and China

which would cause her infinite trouble; and in England, Lord WOLSELEY's vivid imagination conjured up legion upon legion of yellow-skinned troops capable of living upon a few grains of rice per day, but incapable of being beaten if British officers led them on. Then came the war with Japan, and with it the world's awakening.

But yesterday, the word of Cæsar might
Have stood against the world; now lies he there,
And none so poor to do him reverence.

O what a fall was there, my countrymen!

China as a power disappeared. China as a "carcase" round which the "eagles" might gather and feed loomed large before their ravenous eyes. First Germany, then Russia, then France, then England, claimed a share, now Italy, and possibly the United States want spheres of influence or coaling stations, something or other, under some specious title or other, so long as each gets a share of the plunder. China is not to be dismembered; oh no! Russia says so, Great Britain says so, Germany says so, and France. Japan has already her

promise that the province of Fokien shall not be alienated—except of course to Japan; already have European maps been prepared showing, as in the case of Africa, how the division may be done without war. Such was the case in the black man's continent; why not in the yellow man's country? There are ten reasons for the exploitation of China to one for that of Africa. Two or three Chinese provinces would out-number in population the whole African continent; half a province would rival it in wealth were the civilised states excepted. The temptation to the outer world therefore is strong, and nothing whatever but political jealousy prevents the instant extinction of China as a sovereign state. The diplomatic assurances that this country or that has its hands already full, sound well, and appear magnanimous, but they impose upon nobody, not even the Chinese. The integrity of China is probably assured for many years to come. But it is well to remember that its only safeguard lies in Western jealousies and not in Eastern strength.

As though to make her exit from the family of nations as contemptible as possible, China has recently been false even to herself. As though there were not enough enemies hammering at her portals from the outside she needs must put traitors into power within the gates. Re-actionary, misguided, and incompetent, the government has, in trying to play off one power against another, been shorn of the little dignity that once pertained to it. The position would be ridiculous were it not pitiable. It is only by courtesy that China can now be designated an independent power. A private citizen surrounded by a band of brigands may still be *called* a free man, but he hardly feels so. When it is in the power of any one foreign government to veto the acts of the Tsungli Yamen, independence may remain in name, but its substance has vanished.

Is there then any hope for China? This is a question much discussed by the natives themselves, and the answer is both yes and no. There is probably no hope for China as an independent unity under purely

native control. China, like India, is not, in fact, and never was, a unit. She is a congeries of states with marked differences, held together by the same written language, the same beliefs, and many of the same customs. But there would be no weeping in Canton over the fall of Peking, neither would the Kiangsu *pung di nyung* gnash his teeth were Szechuen suddenly to become French or English. There is not sufficient public opinion to make China one united whole. She is worse off than ancient Gaul, whose three parts might be multiplied by at least another three before we reached the limit of the unsympathetic, semi-antagonistic divisions of China. A strong central government established at Nanking with ample means of communication and sufficient power at its back might work wonders, but where is it to come from? England? Impossible at present. Japan? Insufferable—to others besides Russia. China herself? Inconceivable.

We therefore have perforce to fall back upon the continuance for an indefinite period of the present make-

believe. There may be an attempt by and by at the Egyptianising of the Yangtze Valley. It will be a good thing for everybody if it succeeds, but it will not be done as yet. Every country that has a foothold at the moment will strive to strengthen and add to it, but the trade at stake is sufficient to prevent any extraordinary departure on the part of any one power. Concessions to syndicates of all the great nations will go on. Some may prove valuable by and by, the majority will probably come to naught as soon as it is found that investors are too wary to lay up treasure in the Celestial Empire.

But China, immense as she is, covers but a small part of the area to be affected by the development of Russia in the Far East. There is the wide expanse of the Pacific, the greatest sea area the world knows, the connecting link between four continents. Not a bay or gulf, not an inlet, port, or harbour of this immense ocean, but may in the future be affected by the events in the story of Russia and the Far East. On its Eastern slopes we have the immense

territories of the Canadian Dominion and the United States; facing them on the western shores are Japan, Russia, and China, with France and Great Britain further south. In the southern hemisphere there are the promising lands of South America, and the island continent of Australia, while all across the tropical and sub-tropical belt are island paradises destined doubtless in the future to be the happy retreats of thousands of thriving settlements. All this the present ferment in the Far East must affect. Who is to be paramount in this immense area? Mr. BARRETT has answered already, the United States. His patriotism may be leading him a little too fast in this assertion, but it contains we may hope more than half a truth. The position of the United States as owners of the Pacific slope, of Hawaii, and of the Philippines, can be second to none. The claim of the other half of the Anglo-Saxon race being twofold is no whit less in importance. We have Canada at one end of the diagonal, Australia at the other, and unnumbered island posts between. Mr. BARRETT might there-

fore with every show of reason have argued for the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race in the newly opened half of the globe. But claims, however well founded, go for little in these times. They are like well-pointed nails, excellent in temper and quality, but quite useless without a hammer to drive them. In short, claims are as naught without the best of modern forces with which to emphasize them. Men smile at rights, they respect Maxims: a hundred reasons weigh less than one ironclad, and "a fleet in being" is more powerful than many syllogisms. Trans-Pacific cables under Anglo-Saxon control will do something to bind our scattered forces together, but solidarity of interests, similarity in aims, and combination of forces will alone ensure the peaceful development of the immense field which now lies open to us. The citadel of the Far East in China: its keyhole may yet prove to be the Philippines. With the key in American hands, with England's commercial supremacy in China, and an understanding with Japan there need be no fear for the

business of the future, which must increase by leaps and bounds. Of competition, so it be fair and above-board, no one can complain. There need be no war, and there will be no war if commerce is left untrammelled, but it is abundantly evident that if there remains one cause strong enough to bring about a collision between first class European powers that cause will be the curtailment of commerce. For that the modern man must fight or go to the wall. By and by industrialism may not be the controlling factor of the world that it is to-day, but for the present there is but one ruling passion, the passion for trade, the hunger for new markets. With these kings sleep in peace, without them crowns become irksome. Hence the development of the idea of world Empire and the growth of naval armament.

The Far East position then is this: China of herself can do nothing: she never was and never will be capable of facing in fair fight a first class European power. Yet by a fit system of organization, by a better

distribution of her population, and above all by enforced honesty in her public affairs, she may well realise the expectations of even the best of her friends. Japan is watchful and suspicious. Evin-
cing no sign of love for any Western land she yet leans for obvious reasons towards the Anglo-Saxon. Gaining strength day by day, watching her enemies, and waiting her opportunity, her position is such that to her must be given the casting vote when the next Far Eastern fight is done. Like England she is industrial, and becoming more and more so; like England she is a dangerous foe when roused; with England her coasts need have no fear, her interests no care. She is making very satisfactory headway in Korea, and with peace, opportunity, and a sensible *regime* at home her future is assured.

But Russia comes as a disturbing factor, not so much for what she already has done but for what she may, and is in a position to do, in the future. We have shown that we have neither the optimism of the

Russophil nor the pessimism of his opposite. We believe in Russia's pacific intentions so long as peace suits her purpose, and that will be just as long as her rivals are strong enough to face her, and a little more. We have admired her progress; we hope to be able to admire her development in peace and prosperity. Germany for the moment is perforce content. Her Shantung sphere is promising, her commerce is growing, her people apparently reconciled to naval expansion and the attempt at world empire. France is beyond criticism at the moment. She is passing through a period of mental and moral obliquity, and what the future will bring forth none can foresee. Yet she has never ceased her forward movement in China. The United States have begun to realise what their China trade is, and what it might be. Great Britain to a certain extent has lost both in commerce and prestige. She has gained territory but lost ground. Vacillation in her counsels has been most detrimental to her interests, but so far the position is not one to regret very

much. Things might have been better: they might have been worse. On the whole, however, and viewing the position not from the Shanghai or Pekin standpoint merely but as part of the Pacific and Far Eastern question generally, the standing of Great Britain is satisfactory. She has on her side everybody interested in free trade, and she may rely upon powerful aid should it be necessary to enforce her views. Her navy dominates the position, her supply stations are at hand, her docks ready, she has recruiting grounds in Canada and Australia, and, as her possible foes know well, the sinews of war together with the will to use them are hers also should emergency arise. It would be curious if as a result of the Transvaal war, Great Britain found herself with another quarrel on her hands in the Far East. We should then see a forcing of hands and a shaping of alliances with possibly very unexpected results.

XI. CHRONOLOGY.

A.D. 862.—Rurik, the Scandinavian, began to reign. The Tang Dynasty ruling in China.

1054.—Death of Yaroslav, the Wise, and division of his realm. During this century the Russians first heard of Yugra or Siberia.

1223 —About this date, the Golden Horde of Tartars began their ravages in Russia.

1260.—The Mongol or Yuen Dynasty began in China.

1300.—Moscow made capital of Russia.

1368.—The Ming Dynasty came to the throne in China.

1380.—Tartar War. Demetrius Donskoi wins the great battle of Kulikoro.

1383 — Moscow burnt. Tartar suzerainty re-established for another century.

1462.—Ivan III (the Great) ascends the throne. Founds the present monarchy.

1475.—Cannon and firearms introduced.

1480.—Tartar yoke finally cast off.

1499.—First armed force sent into Siberia.

1553. - English-Russian Company started. Richard Chancellor sent to open a trade.

1556-80.—Various English trading expeditions sent to White Sea and north generally.

1571.—Khan of the Crimea takes Moscow. Carries 130,000 people captive.

1573.—The Stroganoff family obtain a charter to trade with Siberia.

1579.—Ivan IV (the Terrible) proposes for the hand of Queen Elizabeth of England.

1581.—Yermak, the Cossack, starts upon his travels under the auspices of the Stroganoffs. Crosses the Ural Mountains.

1582.—Establishes himself upon the Irtish.

1584.—Aug. 5th. Is overwhelmed by the Tartars and drowned in the Irtish.

1586.—Colonists sent from Russia.

- 1598.—The Rurik dynasty ends.
- 1601.—Ricci, the Jesuit, enters Peking.
- 1620.—Cossacks established on the Yenesei.
- 1637 — 1635.—First English ship reached China.
- 1636.—Cossacks reach Okhotsk.
- 1638.—First Russian expedition towards the Amur.
- 1643.—Poyarkoff reaches the Amur.
- 1644.—The present Manchu, or Tatsing Dynasty, began to rule in China.
- 1650.—Khabaroff's expedition descends the Amur for some distance.
- 1651.—Irkutsk founded. Naghiba missing Khabaroff on the Amur descends to the sea.
- 1655.—Manchus repulsed by Russians.
- 1657.—The first Dutch Embassy left China.
- 1684.—Russian posts on the lower Amur destroyed by Chinese.
- 1685-6.—More fighting.
- 1687.—Treaty of Nerchinsk. Russia abandons the Amur. Peter the Great, sole ruler of Russia.
- 1715.—Distances measured between Yakutsk and Okhotsk.
- 1727.—Treaty of Buria.

1728.—Treaty of Kiakta. These treaties regulated commerce and frontier affairs; otherwise for 150 years after the Treaty of Nerchinsk, Russia was quiescent in the Far East.

1731.—Fortnightly service between Moscow and Tobolsk.

1792.—China overthrows the Ghoorkas.

1839.—First war between England and China.

1841.—Hongkong, Canton, Amoy, and Ningpo taken by the British.

✓ 1843.—First steamer on the Ob.

✱ 1846.—First steamer on the Amur.

1847.—Mouravieff appointed Gov.-General of Eastern Siberia.

1849.—He founds Petropaulovsk.

1850.—He establishes Nicolaiefsk.

1853.—Russians occupy posts in Saghalien. Triad Rebels take Shanghai.

1854.—Crimean War. Russian forces descend the Amur. Attack on Petropaulovsk fails. The United States make a commercial treaty with Japan.

1855.—Treaty between Russia and Japan.

1856-7.—Negotiations between Russia and China.

First proposals for Siberian road.

Arrow war began.

Three Japanese ports opened.

1858.—Convention of Aigun gives Russia the left bank of the Amur, and the Ussuri district to the sea.

1859.—General Ignatieff, political agent, at Peking.

1860.—Vladivostock occupied. Peking taken by Anglo-French forces.

1862.—Taipings threaten Shanghai.

1864.—Gordon captures Soochow. Nanking re-taken by Imperialists.

1865.—Japan refuses Kuriles for Saghalien.

1870.—Tientsin massacre.

1872.—Overland telegraph opened through Russia.

1873.—Shimonoseki bombarded by English, French, and Americans. Khiva taken by Russians.

1875.—Exchange of Saghalien for Kuriles.

1876.—Treaty of peace between Japan and China. Khokand annexed by Russia.

1877.—War between Turkey and Russia.

1878.—Treaty of Berlin. Great Nihilist activity lasting for some years.

1881.—Alexander II. assassinated. Treaty between Russia and China settling the Ili question.

1882.—Treaties between Korea and the United States, Great Britain, Germany and Japan.

1884.—Treaty between Korea and Russia. Railway finished to Tiumen. Franco-Chinese war. Chinese and Japanese garrisons fight at Seoul.

1885.—Rice declared contraband of war by the French. Severe fighting in Formosa.

? 1887.—Port Hamilton evacuated by the British. Kuang Hsu assumes power in China.

1889.—Japan by her constitution creates a Parliament. Makes a new treaty with Russia.

1891.—Czarevitch nearly assassinated in Japan. Inaugurates construction of railway at Vladivostock.

1892.—Branch of the China Association established at Shanghai.

1894.—Insurrection in Korea. War between China and Japan. *Kowshing* sunk. Battles of Pingyang, and Yalu. Port Arthur captured.

1895.—Weihaiwei taken. Treaty of Shimonoseki. Convention signed for the retrocession of Liaotung, Russia, Germany, and France having intervened.

1896.—Li Hungchang goes as special envoy to St. Petersburg: travels through Europe and the States.

1897.—West River opened to trade. Germany seizes Kiaochow.

1898.—Russia occupies Port Arthur under "a lease." (March 27th.) Great Britain does likewise with Weihaiwei. (June 24th.) Emperor of China deposed by Empress Dowager. Spanish-American war. Dewey takes Manila. Much bandying on the part of the powers of claims, counterclaims, and assurances respecting China. Contests for concessions, loans, railways, etc., continue throughout the year. Opening of internal waterways to steam traffic. Woosung Railway opened. First train reaches Irkutsk.

1899.—Shanghai settlement extended. "Spheres of influence" v. The Open Door. Italy appears on the scene. Quarrel at Hankow between British and Russians *re* property in Russian concession. Friction in Korea between Russia and Japan.

THE STORY OF RUSSIA AND THE FAR EAST.

PART II.

(SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTERS.)

XII.—RUSSIA AND THE BOXER OUTBREAK.

No one imagined at the end of 1899, the date at which the earlier chapters of this story were written, that China was to go so far in her madness as to throw down the gauntlet to the whole civilized world within the space of half a year. There were no very ominous signs of approaching danger. The year 1899 had been a most successful one from a commercial point of view, the revenue collected from imports never having been so large

before. The EMPRESS-DOWAGER'S coup d'etat though not forgotten had lost most of its sting, and no one would have been surprised if matters had once again settled down as quietly as they can settle in a land governed as China is. But there was a ferment at work that was ere long to produce widespread effects. The north became restless, then disturbed, then violent. Missionaries and mission stations were attacked. There were murders and burnings with concomitant horrors. Laymen began to enquire into the reason for all this uproar, and missionaries did not hesitate to reply. Things went from bad to worse until everybody except the Diplomatic Body at Peking knew that we were face to face with a more serious uprising than China had seen for many a long day. The Shanghai Press did its duty in persistently pointing out the danger. But little notice was taken, and it was not until Peking itself was full of Boxers from one gate to the opposite that Ministers saw the gravity of the situation.

"Then and there was hurrying to and fro."

Guards were telegraphed for, suggestions offered, protests raised and threats made. But it was too late. The crisis which might have been prevented had come.

It is not our intention to follow in detail the course of the suppression of the Boxer movement. The barest outline will be sufficient for our purpose. The Ministers once fairly aroused lost no time. There was indeed none to be lost if they wished to save their skins. The Legation guards arrived at the capital in the nick of time. But for them not a foreigner in Peking would have escaped to tell the tale. The Taku forts were taken. Tientsin was attacked by the Chinese. Fire and destruction spread. Dreadful deeds of massacre were perpetrated. The Legations were besieged and all knowledge of what was occurring in Peking was cut off for weeks. Admiral SEYMOUR made his gallant but vain effort to relieve the Ministers. Then it became evident to the meanest capacity that the rising was being directed and reinforced by the Chinese Government. Controlled it was not, for the sufficient reason that

to a great extent it had got beyond control.

Then troops began to arrive: British, Japanese, and Russians in greatest force, though later French, Austrians, Americans, and Germans swelled the sum total. The Tientsin Settlement was relieved, the native city taken, and the advance on Peking began. Some fairly severe fighting occurred here and there, but not sufficient to stay the onward march of the allies who reached the capital, entered it, found the Legation people, casualties excepted, safe and sound, and the Imperial household gone.

This done, punitive expeditions went hither and thither. Count von WALDERSEE arrived and took over the supreme command. The first to propose withdrawal was Russia. And this brings us to that part of the story which, being particularly hers, belongs especially to the narrative with which we have to deal. There have been many rumours respecting the share Russia had in the suppression and even in the fomenting of the Boxer rising. These have recently been revived owing to a des-

patch of the "Times" correspondent from Paris. M. BLOWITZ claims to have received secret proofs of the complicity of Russia in the initiation of the riots and the direction of the Boxer outbreak against foreigners. It is said that she had come to an agreement with LI HUNGCHANG and the EMPRESS-DOWAGER in the matter, and that whatever happened the latter was to be protected by Russia.

There is a good deal on the face of this that is highly improbable, and we may as well say sooner as later that it is a story in which we put no credence whatsoever so far as the head of the Russian empire or his responsible ministers are concerned. It is impossible to conceive that the CZAR or any of his chiefs of state could have connived at such a ridiculous outburst as the Boxer rising. At the same time we do not desire to give the impression that it is impossible that no Russian might have done so. Experience has shown during the past year that Russian agents do things which Russian ministers wot of, and are apparently not too severely dealt with in conse-

quence. Be this as it may, the outbreak occurred and Russia took her part in its suppression.

Very nobly too did her troops fight on various occasions. But for them it is thought the Tientsin Settlement would have been carried by assault. It was the Russian stand at the railway station which saved the position. Later, too, it happened that they met with strong opposition when entering the capital.

But the greater part of Russia's military operations were in Manchuria. At Blagoveschensk the Chinese had actually bombarded the Russian quarter, and thus taken the offensive. Then followed an event which sent a thrill of horror through the civilized world. The Chinese in Blagoveschensk numbering some thousands were ordered to leave the town, and go across the river to the other side. Somehow or other there was insufficient transport and they attempted to cross by improvised means, some by rafts, some by swimming. It is not quite clear what happened, except that thousands were drowned. The Russian general in

command was blamed, but he declared that he had merely obeyed orders. The truth probably is that there was a mistake somewhere. Englishmen of all men should be chary of giving credence to tales of needless cruelty. They have been too frequently accused themselves not to detest the crime of indiscriminate denunciation, based on ignorance and malice. We may therefore dismiss the Blagoveschensk "Massacre" with little hesitation. It is inconceivable to us that any English gentleman should willingly and knowingly perpetrate such a deed. Should it not be equally inconceivable when a Russian gentleman takes the place of the British? The incident did, however, take place. There is unfortunately no doubt of that, and the Russians regret and are ashamed of it. Manchuria was then invaded in three columns, the Cossacks making short work of the defence. Tsitsihar, the capital of the Hei-lung Chang province soon fell into their hands. Kirin followed. Newchwang was occupied on the 5th of August, and Moukden on the 1st of October. In this way all military opposition

was overcome—that of bandits and guerrillas excepted—and the three eastern provinces as they are known to the Chinese came under the power of the CZAR. What would he do with them? That was the next question, a question which is yet awaiting its answer. What has happened since that time is interesting from many points of view. Primarily it is a matter which affects Russia and China, but as we shall see there are far wider possibilities than the elementary ones of a change of ownership. Some of these throw light on modern diplomacy, some affect one country, some another, but from all points of view the problem is as interesting as it is important.

XIII.—RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

It is now necessary to pause a little to enquire what it is that makes the Colossus of the North so anxious to extend his sway over Manchuria. Till within recent years very few, even of those who had spent a life time in the Far East, knew anything about the vast territory upon which the world's eyes are now set. There were sufficient reasons for this. The winter climate is one of arctic severity and therefore uninviting, though at that season, thanks to frozen snow, travel is comparatively easy. The summer, delicious in its warmth and salubrity, by rendering the roads impassable from mud, restricts communication much more than the cold of winter, so that where water transport is not available, pack animals are the mainstay both of trader and traveller. Ponies, mulcs,

donkeys, and oxen are called into requisition, and their number is legion.

The Chinese know Manchuria under the name of the Tung San Sheng, i.e., literally, the "Eastern Three Provinces," of which the names are (1) Her Lung Chang, so called from the Amur of which gives to the province its name—the "Black Dragon River" province. This is the most northern. (2) Kirin, the central province, with its chief town of the same name, and (3) Feng Tien, the southern. The last named is also known as Shingking, while its peninsular part terminating in Port Arthur is named Liao-tung, i.e., the land East of the River Liao, the actual peninsula itself being sometimes called the Regent's Sword, sometimes Kuantung.

In area Manchuria covers some 360,000 square miles of territory which is considerably more than the combined surface of the United Kingdom and France. It holds a commanding position, being the key not only to northern China, but to Mongolia on the one side, Korea on the

other, and the lands and waters near by.

As has been hinted the climate is extreme, the thermometer in the winter months dropping to nearly— 50° Fah. showing, that is to say, 82° of frost, while in the brief summer the mercury rises to 90° at times. There is therefore a yearly range of about 140° of temperature, quite double the difference known in an average year in England. In the southern portions of course the climate is somewhat milder, but the cold is severe everywhere. Blocks of ice may be seen on the Amur even in May. Newchwang is frozen up for about four months. Port Arthur remains open.

It is estimated that the population of the three provinces amounts to some seventeen millions, but that only a small proportion of these are Manchus. Mr. ALEX. HOSIE in his admirable book reckons their quota at not more than ten per cent., the remainder being Chinese, between whom and their conquerors Mr. HOSIE never could see the "numerous ethnological points of difference"

which some others "profess to be able to see at a glance." The manner in which the Mongol ladies dress their hair, however, the firmer carriage which their natural feet give them, and various differences in dress, distinguish the Manchu lady from her Chinese sister at once. Neither herself nor her men folk are educated up to the best standard prevailing in China.

With the exception of the Board of Civil Office, the six Boards which manage the affairs of China in Peking have their counterparts in Shên-yang, as the Chinese call Moukden. In fact the whole administration seems now to be based on the Chinese system which has replaced the strictly military system of earlier times. The outbreak of the Boxer and the irruption of the Cossack has of course for the time being—and perhaps for ever—modified the native method of procedure.

More than ever the country is at present the prey of the footpad and the mounted robber. Fêngtien has for years suffered largely from these gentry, Kirin even more so. It was

no uncommon thing for villages to be attacked and plundered, and mandarins are not infrequently seized and held to ransom by the brigands of the hills. The insecurity of travel has resulted in the upgrowth of insurance offices who "for value received" will guarantee the safe arrival of a traveller and his effects. This they can do, of course, only by means of black-mail regularly paid. The insurer is given a distinctive flag to fly on each of his carts, and under this sign the traveller conquers one of the dangers of Manchurian travel. So strong are these freebooters that otherwise respectable people are said to debate whether their sons shall join them or go into some other more law-abiding but less lucrative occupation, while instances are known in which the highest authorities have sought their aid and have even entered into written compacts with them. Naturally the revenue suffers in proportion to the number of these ragamuffin desperadoes. Its sources of income are much as in China, land tax, from which the Manchu is exempt, salt, likin, licenses, etc., etc.

From what has been said of the climate it might be imagined that few plants could survive the winter, and that the spring and summer would in consequence have but a very limited flora to exert their powers upon. But this is not the case. Some of the valleys of Manchuria are amongst the most fertile in the world. Cereals grow to perfection and there are altogether eight varieties, three of millet, besides wheat, barley, rice, buckwheat, and maize. Beans are in great variety. In fact bean oil, and bean cake—the pressed remainder of the pulse after the oil has been squeezed out—together with to-fu or bean curd are amongst the most important articles of export. To-fu is perhaps one of the best, if not the very best, of known foods. It contains almost all the nutriment demanded by the healthy human body at a cost which is infinitesimal.

Peas are also grown, as is hemp. There is but little cotton produced. Opium is cultivated everywhere for the same reasons as in many parts of China, viz., because it is used everywhere, and because it is so portable,

a great consideration in a roadless land. Some half dozen kinds of plants are cultivated for their oil. Tobacco grows in all provinces, that of Kirin being considered the best. The Chinese demand for ginseng makes the cultivation of that root a matter of no little importance. Potatoes have been introduced and thrive. Cabbages grow so luxuriantly that Mr. HOSIE tells a tale of one which weighed 400 lbs. and was sent to its destination in a cart. The fruits are varied, but like those of China generally of poor quality, grapes grow in the open air in the southern districts.

Manchuria is fairly rich in animal life. It is perhaps the only country in the world where dogs are farmed, or, to speak more correctly, bred for the sake of their skins. These, when the winter is at its height, are magnificently warm and furry and in consequence worth not a little. Half a dozen dogs make a handsome dowry. Goats likewise are kept in the same way and goat skin rugs are a common export from Newchwang. Amongst wild fur bearing animals

there are several of the sable family, besides wolves, leopards, bears, and tigers. No tiger skin from India can compare with those produced by the magnificent beasts of these colder climes. Deer of various kinds frequent the hilly district. The rivers teem with fish, as do the coasts. The silk worm is confined to the southern province, and is of a wild variety whose product is known as Tussah silk, from two Chinese words meaning "Local or Native Silk." The Manchurian silkworm feeds as a rule on the leaves of the Mongol oak.

As we have said beasts of burden are numerous. So too are pigs. These again are bred with an eye to the portability of their valued carcases. Grain being grown in too immense quantities to remove is used for the purpose of distillation. The refuse feeds great numbers of porkers. Then during the winter when the frozen snow makes easy travelling the spirits and the bacon are easily taken to market.

Rich as Manchuria is in her fauna and flora, she is not less so in her

mineral resources. Gold is worked in many places, as yet very unscientifically. But it is said that the geological conformation of some of the districts is almost exactly like that of Johannesburg. Salt and soda, iron and asbestos are amongst the other minerals that are being exploited.

We have now said enough, without touching upon a single political question, to answer the enquiry with which this chapter opened. We see that Russia in her apparent determination to annex Manchuria knows exactly what she is doing, knows precisely what she is fighting for, and will not take "No" for an answer unless the refusal has something stronger than diplomacy to back it up. A glance at the commercial promise of the Three Eastern Provinces will show still further reason for this opinion. This we intend to take in the next chapter.

XIV.—RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

(Continued)

FROM what has already been said of the natural resources of Manchuria the reader may see that there is every possibility of a large and lucrative trade. A rich producer of raw material with practically no manufactures of importance, Manchuria is in the best possible condition to make commerce welcome and desirable. Trade is none the less barter that money is the medium of exchange, and the products of the fertility of Manchurian soil, the wealth of her teeming animal life, and the riches of her mineral world will, as soon as circumstances permit, be poured out in exchange for the textile fabrics of the west, and the thousand and one "wants" which civilisation creates and well-being provides the needful for.

That this is not too rosy a picture

may be proved from the Customs returns for 1899—the year before the Boxer outbreak. The two railways were in course of construction, but had not yet affected the course of trade. The carter and the junkman were still masters of the situation. Coal was being worked at three different places all within short distances of the railway. An increase of 49 per cent. was the result of the year's working on the value of the trade. In ten years the Newchwang trade had increased five fold. This points to the awakening that followed the Chino-Japanese war. It is estimated that some 1,200 junks visited the river port during the year and took away with them cargo valued at nearly 2 millions of taels. The report continues:—

“The phenomenal goodness of the bean crop, backed by excellent harvests of the other grains produced so prolifically by the rich soil and fine climate of Manchuria; and the high prices obtainable for produce generally, owing to scarcity in the neighbouring province [made] the year an unequalled one for the far-

mers, and their prosperity shows itself in the great feature of the year's trade—the extraordinary development in Imports.”

The revenue for the year showed an increase of 46 per cent. How Japan's interest in Manchuria is growing may be seen from the fact that whereas 10 years ago she had only 5 per cent. of the direct foreign importation to her credit, she now has 32.6 per cent. Her towels, blankets, and cotton flannel have “caught on,” and their sale is rapidly increasing.

We have already referred to the export of Manchurian bean products in the form of the pulse itself, its oil, bean-cake, etc. This last seems to find its way all over the Far East both as a food for cattle and as a fertiliser, particularly for sugar cane. As steam mills come into use there will probably be a much greater output combined with a reduction in price.

More than a million tons of shipping visited the port of Newchwang during 1899. Of this total 36.7 per cent was British and 34 per cent Japanese. Then follow the Chinese,

and *longo intervallo*, the Germans, and Swedes.

Banking appears to be in a curious condition. The Customs Report says "it seems to derive its origin from a primitive system of barter which obtained here when there was not a sufficiency of the precious metals to oil the wheels of trade. It gives some of the advantages of the credit system ; but the high rates demanded by the Sycee Hongs seem to show that the cost of the accommodation is unduly heavy. Business among the natives is done entirely by word of mouth the *lu fang* (Sycee Hongs), books being the only evidence of the transaction. This fact bears witness to the spirit of commercial morality prevailing amongst the Chinese, and their appreciation of the sanctity of contract."

Both at Moukden and Kirin there are mints for the coinage of dollars and of late years these coins have become much more popular, "a hopeful sign," says Mr. BOWRA, "for those who are interested in the rehabilitation of silver."

The Chinese Imperial postal system

has been extended to Manchuria and in 1899 a considerable number of new offices were opened.

But of more importance than post offices are railways. Of these there is the eastern portion of the great transcontinental line which, branching off at Nerchinsk, runs a very direct course for Vladivostock, giving off at Harbin its southern branch terminating in Port Arthur. When the events of June, 1900, burst upon the world, a very great part of these lines had already been completed, so far as that word can be applied to an undertaking which has to be all done over again. Nothing that we have written on this point in the earlier chapters of this story need be withdrawn. The line is a great achievement from any point of view, but it is to be regretted, by Russia more than by anybody else, that whether from faulty estimates or fraudulent practices the construction is so flimsy, that, as we have said, the line requires reconstruction, a process which has actually been begun already, and which, it is believed, will not be completed until Russian gold from

first to last has been sunk to the tune of some £100,000,000 sterling!

A bogus company or society is, by diplomatic fiction, supposed to have received the concession for the construction of the Manchurian railways, but this bit of make-believe deceives no one. Its shareholders must be either Russian or Chinese. In 80 years from the opening of the line it lapses to the the Chinese Government according to the agreement of December 1896, or, after a period of 36 years, China may purchase the line and take over its responsibilities.

Considerable natural difficulties have been met with in the execution of work on the Manchurian sections. The mountains are high and precipitous, the valleys sometimes, during the rainy season, "one immense lake of mud." (Leroy-Beaulieu.) Now that peace is once again restored we may expect a speedy completion of the necessary repairs and the general opening of the line. From Harbin southward the railway runs past a number of more or less important cities, amongst them Shenyang, the

Chinese name for Moukden, Liao-yang, Newchwang, Haichêng, Kaichou, Hsiungyao, Dalny, and so to Port Arthur. Travellers should carefully bear in mind that as a rule the Russian lines run past a place not to it. From motives of economy, the railway engineer keeps his road well away from the busy haunts of men. He never dreams of buying land by the square foot in a city when five miles away he can get it by the acre. If it is inconvenient for the passenger to have to negotiate such distances through slush or snow according to the season, so much the worse for the passenger. The line does not suffer. There is no competition and no chance of any.

We are now in a position to understand the objects and course of the Russian diplomacy of the past few years. That this has been astute goes without saying: that it has had an element of audacity is no less certain, whether or no it has backbone enough to be successful is still to be seen. Russia's intentions are seldom laid absolutely bare. She makes bold bids but has ever a loop-hole of escape.

No one doubts but that she longs intently to close her grasp on Manchuria; no one expects her to unloose her hold, unless she finds it too risky to maintain it. Yet all the while she has, with Asiatic cleverness, prepared for a retirement from which ostensibly she will lose no face. Has she not declared her intention, again and again repeated to give back the provinces to China? When therefore the time comes that she finds herself compelled to keep her word, she may with great plausibility ask the world to witness her strict adherence to her international engagements. But before this occurs, if it ever does occur, there will be yet a chapter or two of diplomacy to be gone through.

XV.—RUSSIA AND MANCHURIA.

(*Continued.*)

It may be as well to mention here that the three supplementary chapters preceding this were written some weeks before there was any thought of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in the mind of the "man in the street." The last paragraph of Chapter XIV therefore may be taken, without too much self glorification as "an intelligent anticipation of events before they occur." For the "chapter or two of diplomacy" therein hinted at have been written and published.

They are summed up in two words—the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

When we published the telegraphic news flashed out to us, many of our readers thought the news too good to be true. The communities of the Far East are

trading communities, and to a man—excepting always the stormy petrels who live best in the din of battle—in favour of peace and quietness. They saw at a glance that the new alliance meant peace, and welcomed it accordingly. For it was recognised at once that there was little likelihood that Russia would fight for Manchuria though it would grieve her to resign both it and herself to the inevitable. The alliance is formed with one open and express object—the *status quo*. Its reception has been highly gratifying. America is delighted: England pleased: Japan in ecstasies. Continental comment has been more complaisant than might have been expected. Germany sees peace and more trade, although it is recognised that the new situation adds strength to British diplomacy. A discordant note or two has come from some, not too influential, sections of the French press. The Russian has as yet not been permitted to criticise freely, but the first announcement in St. Petersburg was that Russia had been kept well posted all along as to the course of the negotiations by the

Japanese ambassador, and that as the Alliance stood for the integrity of the Chinese empire, one of the objects most dear to the heart of the Russian Government, that Government hailed the announcement as one more triumph for the cause of right and justice as understood in Muscovy! A wonderful treaty with wonderful objects and wonderful unanimity! The past year has according to this been the experience of a dismal dream, in which a phantasmagoria has taken the place of the real life in this Far Eastern drama. Otherwise how can we account for the popular picture of events as they were supposed to have occurred. True, it had been stated in the prologue to the drama that no one should seek his own, but every one the good of others. A grand self-denying ordinance has been passed. China was to be whipped, not robbed. Yet when the fighting was over, there began to be rumours as to the desire of the great northern power to take what she had positively declared was not hers to take. And in the dream, as we recollect it, there

were stories of a traitor named Li who sold his fatherland for a mess of pottage and then died before he could eat it; there were bales of diplomatic demands telling of the number of soldiers China might maintain in Manchuria, of the white men (in fur caps) who were to command them, of the assumption of all material power by these said strangers, and the control of all material wealth, and in one part of the vision a tall bearded Don Cossack or some other Muscovite was distinctly heard to say to the Chinese mandarins who were supposed to rule Manchuria, "Know this, and don't forget it! Your land is mine; your people are mine, your belongings are mine, and you are mine! You may not call your very soul your own; and as for allowing any other white man—or yellow man either, unless he is mine—to put his nose within these territories, let me see you do it, that's all!"

And the cringing native in pidgin English said, "All li!" and tried to look as if he liked it. But he didn't; for he came from the Yangtse Valley

where he had heard that his people did not wish their land to be sold or given to the Cossack ; and what is more he had not himself received the traitor's solatium.

All this of course was but the disordered figment of a morbid intellect fed upon Pekin bunders and Morrisonian-Times Correspondence. For have we not had it officially promulgated that Russia is glad to find Great Britain and Japan joining her in rescuing Manchuria from the terrible Boxer, to have them as her allies in the congenial task of supporting China until she has recovered strength to walk alone, and particularly to lean with their broad backs alongside hers against the open door, for fear the pushful German should shut it ! It is an idyllic scene that the world has awakened to, and few would care to go back to the dream again. Even China is changed with the new awakening, for the other day when asked by a Russian diplomat to carry out an old programme—something like the programme of the dream—she actually waxed jocose, and with a

dig in the ribs to the minister, and what passes for a wink in the Far East, she laughed a hearty laugh, the first time for many a long day.

"Really," she said, "that's the best thing I've heard this cycle! Ha, ha, ha! What a joke! Did you get it from JOE MILLER or PAVLOFF?"

You see the Minister was still in the dream. Perhaps he, too, is awake by this time. At any rate his government at home is, and in response to the plainest diplomatic hint that one nation can give to another, the Petersburg Government have informed that of Washington that both China and Russia will recognise the treaty rights of Americans in the three Eastern Provinces! It would have been very interesting indeed, if this hint had been given during the time of the dream, to have watched and waited for its result. Such curious things occur in dreams. When people are awake, sufficiently to take note of what is due to others, it is so much easier to do business with them promptly. China's pro-Russian party and Russia herself in their negotiations over Manchuria were beginning

to dream that nobody had a voice in the Far Eastern conversazione but themselves. When another duet came in, in tones so clear and distinct that all the world heard, there was a momentary start, a rubbing of the eyes, a frown on the one side, a pleased nodding of the head on the other, and both parties were fully alert at once. Then came the peremptory demand of the third party responded to instantly with a "certainly, with pleasure"!

And this is diplomacy.

We have no quarrel with it, since we know that behind the long word there is a much shorter and more powerful one—force. Before considering the probable outcome a pause is necessary. That which was drowsy is now wide awake; that which looked hazy stands clearly revealed; the indefinite has become definite; the blur is focussed. A little watching will disclose unmistakable signs of the trend of events. We shall see what we shall see.

XVI.—WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF
RUSSIA GOT MANCHURIA ?

WE have now brought things down to the point when accomplished facts begin to throw light on future events. England and Japan, the two empires so like, so unlike each other, are in close alliance. If either fights, the other keeps the ring clear. If either is mobbed the other comes to its aid. It is a good working understanding. Afloat no combination even, much less any single power, could withstand the navies of the two island empires combined. Ashore it would likewise be hopeless for any European states to oppose. In the first place the sea would not be at their disposal for the conveyance of troops, in the second place this effort would be entirely beyond the strength of any coalition; for Japan can, if pushed, dispose of half a million trained

troops, and we know what a task it is to transport half that number with munitions and other necessities. In saying, therefore, that behind the diplomacy of the alliance there lurked all requisite force we were making an assertion that none can deny. At the same time, at the present time, and at all times, we hope and believe that the alliance is peace. What there was in the German text of the Anglo-German agreement which could be construed as the German Government construed it no one with a less intimate knowledge of their tongue than is native to Berlin could ever imagine. British geography, like Japanese and Chinese geography, had always supposed Manchuria to be a part of the Celestial Empire. But in Dame Germanius' school it was not so, and it is possible that in this case her cartographers had imported up-to-date maps from Russia. At any rate there is no mistake now, and any boy of English parentage, of Japanese extraction or American birth who fails to answer correctly on this point will be counted as geographically untaught.

What would have happened had Russia made good her pretences we may now consider impartially.

In the first place Manchuria would not have gone without Mongolia. Master of the one Russia would soon have been lord of the other, and in all probability of all the other outlying dependencies of China including Tibet. Nothing could have stopped her onward march, and China with all her millions, with all her possibilities for good or evil would have been at the disposal of the absorbing Muscovite. What would he have done with the acquisition? He certainly would not have strengthened it for its own good. The KAISER is not the only European who foresees a "yellow peril." Many Russians recognise it, and are desirous for their own ends of preventing, or at any rate of postponing, its advent. A strong China would be a menace first of all to Russia. It would be upon Russia that the brunt of the first attack would fall, and Russia knows what a Mongol invasion is. As we have shown in the early chapters of this story, and as the educated world

all know, Russia was for centuries a Tartar dominion. Hence the saying of NAPOLEON, "Scratch the Russian, and you find a Tartar." In self-preservation therefore, if Russia acquired the outlying parts of the Chinese empire her first object would be to keep down the Eighteen Provinces, to prevent any accession of strength unless controlled by her, in short to make of China Proper a Russian Protectorate. That would be her aim.

With regard to the effect of the Russian absorption of Manchuria upon Japan we have no need to go far for opinions. The whole Japanese press is unanimous upon the point. They recognise that there are some things in which a nation may give way without imperilling the national destiny. This is not one of them, for though Manchuria per se is not of vital interest to Japan, Korea is, and in Korea the influence of the island empire with Russia in Mongolia would sink to zero. All her chance of expansion, her trade, her foreign food supply would at a stroke be placed at the mercy of a merciless rival, and

this by a proud and a patriotic people can never be tolerated.

We have mentioned one of the results that would follow to China as a whole. To her government the effect would not be less disastrous. Whatever prestige remains to the Manchu dynasty would go the moment China's millions knew of the alienation. It is true that China has ere now ceded large tracts of land to Russia, but that was in prehistoric times comparatively, in the days when the "Peking Gazette" edited by the Government itself was the only means of disseminating "news" of what occurred. Now that every treaty port swarms with native press-men whose productions go away into the remote corners of the land, there is growing up, as we know from actual experience, a public opinion in China, an opinion which the government is already desirous either of curbing or conciliating. In all probability therefore the beginning of China's dismemberment would be the end of the dynasty. This seems to have been foreseen clearly enough by the arch-traitor

LI, and, with him, to foresee was to forearm. It had already been agreed that in return for Manchuria, Russia was to uphold the Manchu dynasty, in all its "Great Purity."

This would have suited the Muscovite purpose admirably. A protected state, as China then would have been, is a weak state destined to grow weaker unless the protector has the genius for imparting strength which is characteristic of British rule in Egypt and India. For reasons that we have already given, Russia could not be expected to act toward China in this way. It is therefore a good thing both for the Manchu and the Chinaman that so far as can be seen at present, they may still remain lords of their patrimony.

XVII.—WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF
RUSSIA GOT MANCHURIA ?

(Continued.)

WE have noted the probable political effects of an absorption of the Three Eastern Provinces by Russia. Commercially the results to other nations would be disastrous. The title frequently claimed for the CZAR's dominions, "Holy Russia" pre-suppose a Christian basis, and Christianity condemns selfishness. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them" is presumably well known from Archangel to Odessa. But practical Christianity and practical politics are far as the poles asunder. We do not complain when each nation carries out logically and systematically the protection of its own interests, but we do complain rightly and unanswerably when others' interests are arbitrarily in-

fringed, when in short "open doors" are shut and open competition prevented. That is our main quarrel with Russia. How her influence would affect international commerce in China is so plain as to need no comment.

Would she be strengthened thereby? Unquestionably the closing of all freeports and the setting up of different tariffs would aid Russian commerce immensely at the cost of other nations, just as the retention of all mining and other rights in Manchuria would have enriched her by impoverishing the rest, but there is one way in which her genius for assimilation might have made her a more formidable enemy than she now is. She already has hordes of hardy horsemen at her beck and call. If to them had been added the tribes of Mongol riders, men as accustomed to the rigour of the severest winter as they are to the summer heat, men who are fearless in battle if well armed and led, men who can live on nothing, and die without care, who would like nothing better than to be led against the softer, gentler, and

richer Chinamen of the plains, with untold thousands of these always ready, always on a war-footing, the position of Russia would have been much more formidable than it now is. As things stand, a Russian army cannot threaten any part of China Proper without leaving its flanks and rear dangerously exposed. It is to be presumed that living Chinese statesmen have not failed to recognise these simple facts, and that they are not prepared, as LI HUNG-CHANG was, to sell their country to its most dangerous foe.

Having said so much respecting the danger to China and other lands of a Russian occupation in permanence of Chinese soil, we may well turn to the other side of the picture. Would there have been any advantages to counterbalance the admitted disadvantages? It is difficult to see how any outside nation could have gained anything. But for the dwellers in Manchuria, it is quite possible that under a Russian regime great improvements would have resulted ere many years had passed. We have spoken already of the curse of brigand-

age. Under Russian rule with a few thousand Cossack horsemen this scourge of semi-civilized lands would be swept away as chaff before the breeze. There can be no development anywhere until men are secure in the possession of the products of their labour. Whether the robber, the brigand or the mandarin be the despoiler, whether he wear the feathered official hat of China, or the horsehair covering of Korea matters nothing, wherever he holds sway the land will be a desert or bordering upon it. Russian despotism may not be all that the freer peoples of the west would like, and in some ways Russian systems of Government will hardly bear comparison with those of China but there is security of possession without fear of arbitrary confiscation wherever the CZAR holds sway.

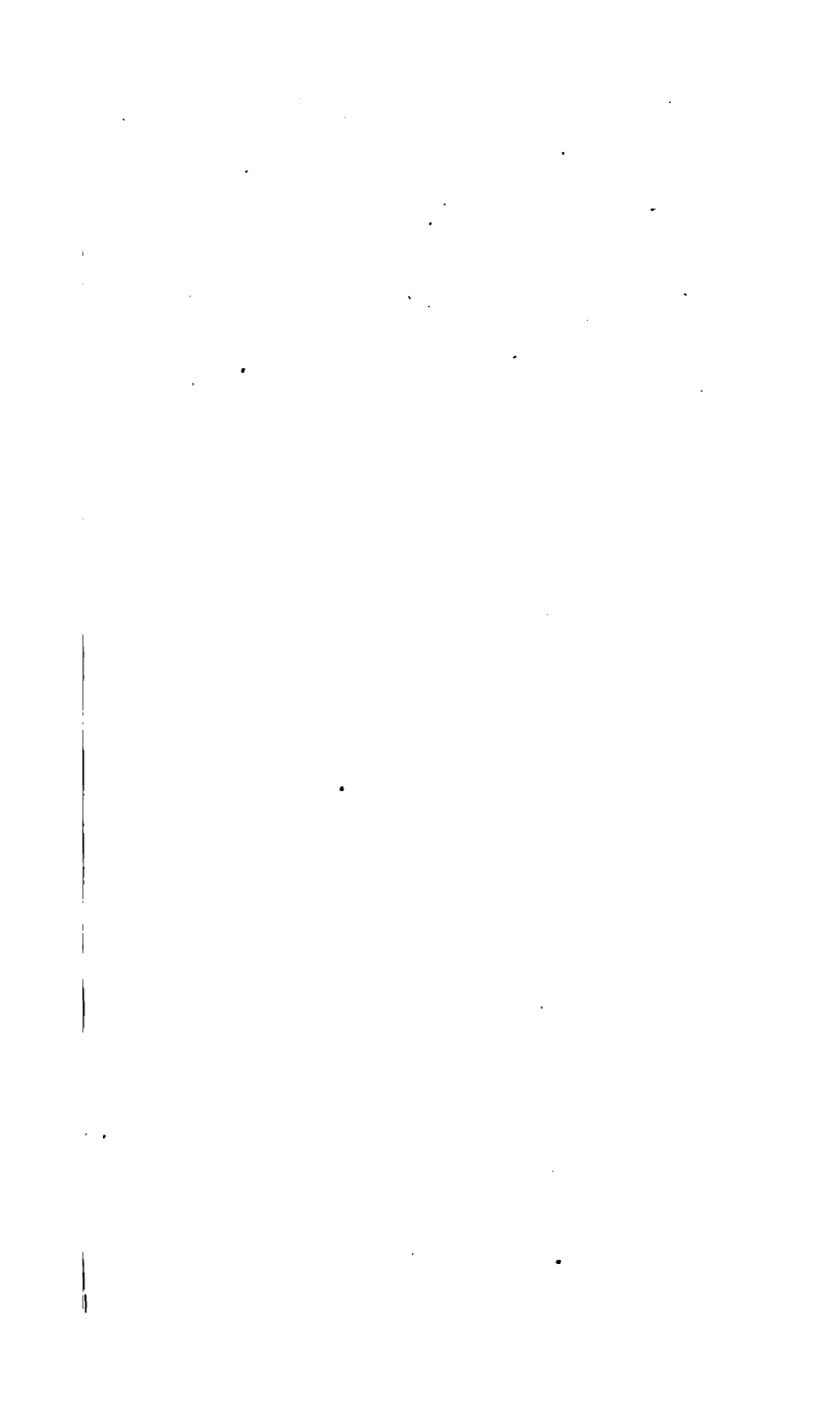
The Russian too would have developed the land as soon as he had cleared it of its thieves, and though he may be selfish he could not enrich himself without aiding the enrichment of others. He might

have shut out British, American, and Japanese goods to some extent, but in spite of himself he would have had to buy from lands that produce what he does not, and in this way another developed country would have been added to the sum total of the world's work-fields. The pre-occupation of Russia in Manchuria would, in fact does even now, tend to keep the peace in Europe. So little love is lost between Germany and Russia that this is perhaps a good thing. We do not want to see a war in Europe whether over the Balkan States, Alsace-Lorraine, or the new German Tariff. War is a curse of ever growing magnitude and the modern tendency to adjust quarrels by arbitration is not yet strong enough to blunt one sword or burst one gun. There are no ploughshares as yet manufactured from war weapons, no pruning hooks from spears. Nation does lift up sword against nation, and men do still learn war. Hence the occupation of men's attention by matters akin to the Manchurian is no bad thing. If

diplomacy is worth anything at all—though the experience of recent years has not raised its reputation—it ought to be able to keep the peace. By and by it may be discovered that Russia and Japan, China and England, America and all the rest will be able to adjust their little differences in such a way that all are satisfied, and none harmed. So that that may come to pass peace with honour on all sides is imperative, and in time all difficulties may right themselves.











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